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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

A FIGHT FOR MONEY, OR, FROM SCHOOL TO WALL STREET.

By A SELF-MADE MAN.



"See," said Arthur, raising the corner of the rug and exposing a number of bills, "here is the money he took." Sol Eccles was furious. He tried to spring at the young messenger, but was prevented by the two clerks.

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STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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A FIGHT FOR MONEY

OR,

FROM SCHOOL TO WALL STREET

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

LEAVING SCHOOL.

"Say, Art, I've been looking for you all over the grounds," said Bob Barker, as Arthur Gage issued from the gymnasium of Berkeley Academy with a baseball bat in his hand.

"What for?" asked Art, a bright-looking boy of sixteen.

"Dr. Mallet wants to see you in his study, right away."

"That so? I wonder what he wants with me?"

"Couldn't say. He told me to find you and send you to him."

"All right. I was just going over to the diamond to practice with our team. Take my bat over, will you, like a good fellow? Tell the boys I'll be there as soon as I can."

Bob nodded and Arthur turned away and started for the doctor's office.

Berkeley Academy was a select school for boys, situated on the suburbs of a small town in New York State, and Arthur Gage was regarded by the principal and the faculty as one of its brightest and most promising pupils.

He was the son of the cashier of a New York trust company, and life as far as he knew it had been a sunny dream.

Things had always come his way, and he had never known what it was to want for anything since he was born.

That doesn't mean that his father was wealthy, as wealth goes these days.

Mr. Gage was simply what might be termed well-to-do.

He lived in a brownstone house on West Seventy-third Street, which, however, he didn't own, and tried to enjoy

life as most men do who have a good, steady position with a comfortable salary attached.

He had been the cashier of the trust company for fifteen years or more, and the president and officers reposed the utmost confidence in him.

Apparently he was well fixed for life.

Arthur was in his second year at the academy, and it was his father's intention to send him to Princeton College when he graduated.

Bob Barker, his chum at the school, also expected to go to Princeton at the same time, and they often talked about the fine times they expected to have together when they came to board in that ancient town.

The two boys shared the same room in the dormitory building, and were generally together during the time allotted to recreation.

As Art walked toward the principal's office he wondered why Dr. Mallet had sent for him.

A student was only called to the doctor's study for some important reason, such as if he was persistently neglectful of his studies, or had broken some strict rule of the school, or was wanted for some other special reason.

As Art was always well up in his studies, and never transgressed any of the academy regulations, it was not for either of these reasons that the doctor wanted to see him.

Art knocked on the principal's door and was told to enter.

He did so, and then Dr. Mallet, with a grave face, pointed to a chair beside his desk.

"I've just received a letter from your mother, Arthur, and she tells me to send you home at once."

"At once, sir?" gasped the boy.

"At once," replied the professor.

"Has anything happened to my father?" asked Art, with an effort and a frightened look.

"I'm afraid there has."

"Is he dead?" fluttered the boy, turning deathly pale.

"Not that I am aware of."

"Then he is sick—very sick, I suppose?"

"No, that isn't the trouble. It is something more serious than that."

"How can it be when you say he is not dead so far as you know?"

"My dear boy, there are some things worse even than death."

"Worse than death! I do not know what you mean," said the lad.

"It is best that you should know the truth now, here in my study, than learn it on the train from the public print, as you could scarcely fail to do."

Art, with a bewildered look on his face, stared helplessly at Dr. Mallet.

"Your father has suddenly disappeared," went on the doctor.

"Suddenly disappeared!"

"Yes, and the newspapers say that half a million dollars in cash disappeared at the same time from the vaults of the trust company of which he is the cashier. No one but the president of the company and your father knew the combination of the big steel safe, and none but they had access to the vault. Under these circumstances your father's unexplainable absence, together with the equally unexplainable shortage of the funds, has given rise to a strong suspicion that, I regret to have to tell you, your father took the money and fled to parts unknown with it."

"My father a thief!" flashed Art. "Never. I'll not believe it."

"For your sake, as well as his own, I hope he is not."

"Has the president of the trust company accused him of taking the money?" said Art, indignantly.

"Here is a New York paper with the particulars as far as the press has been able to get at the facts. You had better read it for yourself. It will tell you all I know about the matter myself. After you have read the story you had better go to your room and pack your trunk. Here is money sufficient to defray your expenses home. I have arranged for you to have your supper in the refectory at five o'clock. At half-past five your trunk will be sent to the station. The next train for New York will stop here at 5:50. I am sorry to have you leave us, Arthur, for you are one of our best students; but I am more than sorry that you leave under such discouraging conditions. Perhaps the mystery of your father's disappearance, as well as that of the money, may be cleared up satisfactorily, and I sincerely hope it may. In that event I shall expect to see you back again."

Arthur rose from the chair like one in a dream, walked unsteadily toward the window, and opened the newspaper.

On the first page, in staring big headlines, he read:

"The Atlas Trust Co. in trouble. Its cashier, Frank Gage, and half a million of money mysteriously missing. President Mallison optimistic but reticent. The news creates considerable excitement in Wall Street, but the solvency of the company is not generally questioned."

Then followed the details in small type, and it was not pleasant reading for Arthur, for the evidence seemed to show that Frank Gage was an absconder and a thief.

The boy read every word carefully from first to last, in the hope that he might find a silver lining to the dark cloud that overshadowed his father's good name, but he was disappointed.

While the paper did not brand his father absolutely as a thief in so many words, the implication was there in cold type, just the same.

Several detectives were hunting for the missing man, and incidentally the missing funds, and it was hoped that both would be found within a short time.

When Art finished the story he crushed the paper in his hand, dropping it on the floor, and he was leaving the doctor's study in a dazed way, when the principal called him back and told him that he had forgotten to take the money that was to carry him to New York.

Mechanically he pocketed it, bade the doctor good-by, and slowly left the study.

He went directly to his own room and began to pack his trunk.

He hardly seemed to realize what he was doing, for he was stunned by the blow which had fallen on him and his mother like a bolt out of a clear sky.

His brain was in a whirl.

This was the first jolt he had ever experienced, and for that reason he could not understand its real meaning to him and his future.

The sunny side of life had suddenly become overcast with black, threatening clouds, and in the lowering distance came the low mutterings of thunder that presages the coming storm that is about to sweep across the darkened landscape.

At last he had his trunk and suitcase packed and strapped, and then he stood gazing down at them as if wondering why he had put himself to so much trouble.

The last rays of the declining spring sun were shining in at the window, and as they rested softly on the vacant shelf from which he had removed his familiar school books, he caught his breath with a dry sob.

He was awaking at last to the misery of his situation, just as the unconscious patient, removed from the operating table to his bed, comes back to life and the realization that he is a bundle of tortured nerves.

He could hear the distant shouts of the boys on the ball field, and every shout cut through his brain like a knife.

He was going away from dear old Berkeley, where he had fondly hoped to graduate with honor—going away, like a thief in the night, probably never to return.

Could it be true that this was a cold, hard fact and not some hideous nightmare?

He was leaving without saying good-by to Bob, his chum, or the rest of the lads with whom he was so popular.

What would they think of him when they learned the truth?

That his father was a—no, no, it was a lie! A base, cruel lie!

The father he loved and respected an absconder and a thief!

Impossible.

Though all the world said so in trumpet tones, he would not believe it.

And while he stood there like a graven image of misery a knock came at the door and then one of the servants looked in and told him that his supper was ready in the refectory.

Slowly he descended the stairs and went to the eating hall.

Whether he ate much or little he never remembered, but he had a fleeting vision through one of the windows of his trunk in a light wagon on its way to the station.

Half an hour later he was seated in the train on his way to New York.

CHAPTER II

THE RAILROAD DISASTER.

The car in which Arthur sat was not very crowded, and so he had a double seat to himself.

As the train speeded southward he reclined against the corner of the seat, with his elbow on the window ledge, his chin supported by the palm of his hand, and his eyes fixed in an absent kind of way on the fleeting landscape.

Life seemed to have lost all attraction for him at that moment, and his face showed that he was not happy.

He was a fine-looking boy, and this fact, as well as his melancholy expression, attracted the attention of a very pretty girl who occupied the opposite seat.

Of course, she did not stare at him; but she cast occasional and furtive glances at him, wondering what was the cause of his dejection.

She was in charge of an elderly, dignified gentleman who looked enough like her to be taken for her father.

He occupied the seat beside her until shortly after the train pulled out of the town where Arthur had boarded the car, and then went forward to the smoking-car to enjoy a cigar.

The girl, left to herself, leaned back in her own corner and seemed to take more interest than ever in the attractive boy across the aisle.

There did not seem to be much chance that she would ever learn the identity of the boy who engrossed so much of her attention, and yet strange things happen in this world in the most unexpected manner.

Twilight was settling down upon the landscape, and the lights in the car were being lit by a brakeman.

The train had a long run to the next stopping place, and the engineer had added an extra burst of speed to make up some minutes he had lost on his trip.

No one aboard especially remarked this, as the roadbed was solid and the cars slipped along as smooth as silk.

Suddenly, without the least warning, as the train was rounding a sharp curve on a fifteen-foot embankment, a terrific shock staggered the last three cars, in the forward one of which the young people were riding.

Before any one could even utter a cry of terror, the three cars in question left the track and were hurled down the embankment, where they were piled up in shapeless wrecks in the twinkling of an eye, and human beings, full of life and hope a moment before, were suddenly ushered into eternity, or maimed and mangled for life.

Arthur was stunned by the shock, and made giddy by the

wild vaulting of the car as it leaped down the embankment to destruction.

He was bruised and lacerated, but not seriously injured.

Arthur was a plucky boy, endowed with a remarkable degree of self-possession, and never gave up anything as long as there was a chance of holding on.

This faculty had stood him in good stead in many a stubborn fight for athletic supremacy among his fellow students, and earned for him the enviable title of captain of the school.

Finding that he was not killed, or even badly injured, he crawled out from beneath the wreck that overwhelmed him.

A scene terrible beyond the powers of description met his bewildered gaze.

The car in which he had been riding had been literally wrenched in pieces, and the passengers were partially buried beneath the fragments.

Men and women were frantically trying to disengage themselves from the wreck.

Some were weeping, some moaning, while others lay motionless and silent.

His own personal misfortune had vanished from his mind in the presence of this terrible calamity.

Like the brave young fellow he was, his first consideration, after he had assured himself that he was comparatively uninjured, was for those who were his fellow passengers on this race to ruin and death.

Looking around him, his gaze lighted on a female form pinned underneath a twisted car seat.

The sight aroused all his energies, and he felt that strength which fired his muscles on the gridiron when the Berkeley Academy eleven were battling for victory against the strong junior team of an adjacent university.

With desperate eagerness he seized the wrecked seat and wrenched it aside, revealing the lovely young girl whose last conscious look, though he knew it not, had been on his face when the accident occurred.

The boy bent down and tenderly raised her inanimate form in his arms.

Her eyes were closed and her pale cheek was stained with blood.

"My gracious!" he ejaculated. "Is she dead?"

She seemed scarcely alive as she lay like a limp bundle in his embrace.

If she breathed it was so faint that he did not notice it.

He bore her in his arms to a spot near the river bank, away from the scattered fragments of the train, and laid her gently down.

Then he endeavored by all means in his power to coax back the spark of life that seemed to tremble in the balance.

In the hollow of his two palms he dipped water from the stream and dashed it repeatedly in her beautiful face, which interested him more than the countenance of any girl he had ever seen in his life before.

He wiped the spots of blood from her cheek, chafed her temples, and exerted himself to the best of his knowledge in her behalf.

The task seemed hopeless, and he was about to abandon it in despair, when an almost imperceptible sigh escaped her half-parted lips, and caused him to eagerly renew his exertions.

Encouraged by the success which was rewarding his ef-

forts, he continued to bathe her face and rub her temples till the lovely stranger opened her eyes.

Her gaze rested on the face of the boy who had last been in her thoughts, and she looked wonderingly up into his eyes.

For a moment or two she did not stir, nor remove her eyes from his face, then as consciousness reasserted itself, she struggled to raise herself, and cast a bewildered glance around her.

"What has happened?" she gasped, finally.

"An accident has happened to the train," replied Arthur.

"An accident!" she repeated in a dazed way. "My father! Where is he?"

"Your father!" ejaculated the boy.

"Yes, yes," she breathed in some excitement, as the fearful nature of the catastrophe dawned upon her mind.

"I do not know your father, miss. There was no man under the seat near you."

"He was not with me in the car when the terrible shock came. He was in the smoking-car in the front part of the train. If he is dead I want to die myself!"

Her distress in her weak condition alarmed the boy, and he hastened to try and reassure her.

"A great many of the passengers have escaped uninjured," he said, in a hopeful tone, though as a matter of fact he did not know how many had been so fortunate, for the darkness, broken only by flickering lights here and there, prevented him from gauging the actual extent of the calamity. "Your father may now be looking for you."

"Do you think so?" she asked, with pathetic eagerness.

"Certainly, I do."

"You have been very good to me," she said, earnestly. "Did you bring me here?"

"Yes; I took you out from under a broken seat in the car. You must have been sitting near me on the opposite side."

"I was," she replied, faintly. "You are hurt yourself," she added, grasping him by the arm. "There is blood on your forehead."

"It's nothing," replied Art, carelessly, for he had not paid any attention to the cuts on his head in the excitement of the occasion.

"Are you sure?" she asked, earnestly.

"Don't worry about me. Think about yourself. How do you feel now?"

"Not very good. I feel dreadfully weak, and my right arm pains me very much."

Arthur saw that it lay limply by her side and it struck him that it might be broken.

He knew that she ought to have the services of a physician, but there was no chance of that at present, until the intelligence of the disaster had reached the adjacent town and a corps of doctors sent forward to the relief of the wounded.

At that moment he discovered the engine and the forward part of the train backing down the railroad.

Then he understood that only the three rear cars had been precipitated over the embankment; the accident having been caused by the breaking of an axle on the car in which he and the girl had been riding.

He knew then that all the passengers in the smoker, and the coach immediately behind it, had escaped the disaster.

He hastened to impart the joyful tidings to the girl.

"Your father is surely safe," he said, eagerly. "The smoking-car was not thrown from the track."

"Thank Heaven!" murmured the girl, devoutly.

She closed her eyes with a sigh, and fainted from pain and weakness.

Arthur was much concerned over her condition, and he renewed his good offices to bring her to her senses again.

He soon succeeded, much to his relief.

"If I dared leave you for a few minutes I'd try to find your father," he said.

"Do, ah, do!" she cried, earnestly. "I want him. I feel so bad."

"Then I will. What is your name?"

"Bessie Warwick. Tell me yours that I may let my father know how kind and good you have treated me."

"Arthur Gage."

She smiled faintly and looked at him with eyes that shone with gratitude.

Then he hastened away to find her father.

The uninjured passengers were now rushing to the aid of those who had been caught in the wreck, and among the rest was John Warwick, who was a New York broker.

He saw at a glance that the car where he left his daughter was now a shapeless ruin, lighted up in places with flickering flames, where the gas jets had ignited the woodwork.

He was frantic at the thought that his only and beloved child might be at that moment dead or dying somewhere in the wreck.

Indeed, all the chances were in favor of such a thing, for it did not seem as if one soul could have escaped alive from that particular car.

Down the side of the embankment he rushed with the others and made a dash for the shapeless car just as Arthur approached from the river side.

Shaping his hands like a funnel, Art shouted "Warwick" repeatedly.

At length the agonized broker heard his name and looked around.

"Warwick!" roared Art again.

"Here, here," cried the gentleman, and he rushed around the end of the wreck. "My daughter," he ejaculated. "Do you know anything about her? Speak, for Heaven's sake!"

"Yes, sir. Come with me; I'll take you to her."

"She is hurt?" said the father, feverishly.

"I'm sorry to say that she is."

"Badly? Don't tell me she is dying!"

"I think not, sir. I fear her arm is broken. Perhaps that is the worst."

"Heaven grant so!" said Mr. Warwick, earnestly.

"Here she is, sir," said Art, leading him to the recumbent girl.

"My Bessie! My darling girl!" cried the broker, dropping on his knees beside his child. "Tell me that you are not seriously injured!"

"I don't know, father," replied the girl, placing her left arm around his neck and kissing him. "My right arm is numb and pains me dreadfully."

"I'm afraid it is broken," said her father. "I trust that is the extent of your injury. There is a slight cut on your head, but it seems unimportant."

"You must thank that boy, father. He carried me from

the car while I was unconscious and brought me here. Then he bathed my face and revived me. He has been very, very good to me. Thank him. His name is Arthur Gage."

"Young man," said the broker, in a voice that trembled with grateful emotion, "I am under the greatest of obligations to you. I thank you from my heart for what you did for my poor Bessie. Here is my card. I live in New York and have an office in Wall Street. You must call and see me in a day or two. Promise me that you will, for I must know you better. I cannot let the services you have rendered my child pass without some substantial token of my gratitude."

"I think I will go now and see if I can be of help elsewhere. Your daughter does not need me any longer, now that you are with her. I am glad I was able to render her the little service I did. Good-by, Miss Warwick."

"You will come back, won't you?" she said, almost pleadingly. "I haven't thanked you myself yet, and I want to do so as soon as I feel able to."

"It isn't necessary for you to thank me," replied Art. "Your father has just done that."

"But you will come back. I want—to see you again."

"All right," replied the boy. "I will come back as soon as my services are of no further use to the others."

"Thank you," she replied, languidly, and he walked quickly away.

CHAPTER III.

DEAD TO THE WORLD.

While the wounded, maimed and the dead were being rapidly removed from the pile of ruins, the conductor of the train sent the uninjured section ahead to the town of Hudson, a mile below, for doctors and such other assistance as the occasion demanded.

Arthur worked like a beaver with the passengers and train hands who had not been hurt, and the experience he went through was never wholly effaced from his mind.

When there was nothing further for him to do, he returned to the spot where he had left Bessie Warwick and her father.

The girl was faint from the pain of her arm, and moaned repeatedly.

Art looked at her with sympathetic eyes, though she was a hundredfold better off than many he had helped carry from the wreck.

"I am satisfied that she has sustained no more serious injury than a broken arm," said Mr. Warwick. "Though that is bad enough, of course; but it isn't as serious as if she had received internal injuries."

Arthur remained with father and daughter until the cars came back with a bunch of doctors hastily gathered by the railroad officials at Hudson.

One of these was secured to attend to Bessie Warwick.

He announced that the girl had a compound fracture of the arm, and he proceeded to repair the injury temporarily as well as he could.

She fainted under the operation, but was easily revived after it was finished.

A wrecking crew had also been brought to the scene, and the men were hustling to repair a small section of the track that had been torn apart.

By the time the wounded had been placed aboard a special car sent for the purpose, and the dead laid out in the baggage car, the track was in good order again, and the train following, that had been held up at a signal station, was allowed to proceed.

Before it reached the scene of the accident the dead and desperately wounded were landed at Hudson, and the rest of the passengers, including Mr. Warwick, his daughter and Arthur Gage, were on their way to New York.

The final editions of the evening papers contained a rough account of the railroad disaster, and the friends and relatives of many of the passengers were at the depot making anxious inquiries as to their fate.

Art parted with his new and very grateful friends at the Grand Central Depot, and hiring a cab drove straight to his home.

When Arthur reached home he found his mother anxiously awaiting him.

She was in deep trouble over the disappearance of her husband, and about the report that half a million of the trust company's funds had vanished with him.

Of course she did not for a moment believe that her husband had taken the money.

She was satisfied that he was not that kind of man.

She thought it was cruel of the newspapers to hint that a trusted employee of his standing with the company was guilty of the crime of theft.

She felt that her husband must have met with foul play, and she grieved to think that some terrible fate might have overtaken him.

The fact that she knew detectives were searching for him was a satisfaction to her, notwithstanding that their quest bore an ugly look to the public at large.

She had sent for her son because she wanted him by her side in her trouble, and Art was glad to be on hand to comfort her in every way he could.

Next morning he went down to the Atlas Trust Co. to make inquiries on his own hook, though the morning papers had said that there were no new developments in the case.

A run had been started on the company as soon as the news of their large cash loss became public, but this was met so promptly, together with assurances that the surplus of the company amply protected the depositors, which fact was demonstrated by the latest report of the company to the State banking department, and verified by the bank examiner, that it soon stopped and business went on as before.

David Mallison, president of the trust company, received Arthur in his office.

To the boy's inquiries he was non-committal, but his manner was not reassuring.

A shrewd observer would have decided that he believed his cashier guilty, and that was the impression in Wall Street.

After leaving the trust company Art made a call at John Warwick's office, and found the broker on hand.

Mr. Warwick was very glad to see him, and to his inquiries as to Miss Bessie's condition he was informed that she was getting on as well as could be expected.

The broker handed him his home address, saying that his daughter would be quite delighted to see him if he could make it convenient to call on her.

Art promised to do so, for he was greatly interested in improving the chance to know the fair girl better.

Mr. Warwick then asked him if he could be of any service to him.

"I should be glad of an opportunity to testify my appreciation of your services to my daughter," he said. "I cannot, of course, think of offering you pay for what you did, since my whole fortune is as nothing beside my child's life, and any sum I might offer you would be small in comparison to the worth of your kindness. But if I can in any way advance your interests I will gladly do so, either now or in the future, if I live. Perhaps you would not object to telling me something about yourself that I may become better acquainted with you."

"Well, sir, at the present moment I, as well as my mother, am in great trouble."

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear that. If I can help you out——"

"No, sir; you can do nothing. You must have already read in the newspapers that Frank Gage, cashier of the Atlas Trust Co., is missing."

"I saw the story in yesterday afternoon's paper, which I purchased on the train. Is he a relative of yours?"

"He is my father."

Mr. Warwick was surprised.

He knew nothing about the matter except what he had read in the newspapers, but on their showing he received the impression that the missing cashier was guilty of embezzlement.

The guilt or innocence of Frank Gage had not especially interested him, as he did not know the man, but it was different now that he was under such obligations to the unfortunate cashier's son.

He hastened to sympathize with the boy, and to assure him that the mystery would probably be soon cleared up and his father found.

"I hope so, Mr. Warwick. But I think it a shame to have the integrity of my father questioned. He is missing, it is true, but there is not a bit of proof to show that he took a dollar of the company's money. His fifteen years' service as cashier ought to count for something against such a suspicion. Is it reasonable to suppose that he would sacrifice his reputation, his position where he made a good salary, and his family for the mere possession of half a million dollars, with the almost certain chance of arrest in a short time?"

"It certainly does not look reasonable for a man in his right mind to do such a thing," admitted the broker. "Some men, however, will take all those chances in order to get the means to speculate in the stock market on some tip they have acquired. If the tip turns up results, they return the money they temporarily misappropriated and no one is ever the wiser that they took a desperate risk to advance their financial standing. On the other hand, if the tip fails them, flight is their only hope to escape the penalties they have incurred."

"My father never speculated, at least, not to my, or mother's, knowledge."

"That should be a matter of great satisfaction for you at this trying time."

"It is."

"I presume your father never showed any indication of a temporary aberration of the mind," said the broker.

"I never knew that he did."

"People have been known to drop out of sight in a most singular manner, even as your father did, and then, after a lapse of years, turn up again, without the least recollection of what happened to them, or where they have been, during the interval. To all intents and purposes a certain number of years dropped out of their lives, of the doings of which they have no record. Many such cases have been noted in the public press."

"Do you think such a thing happened to my father?" asked Art, eagerly.

"It would be impossible for me to say without knowing whether there was any hereditary tendency in your father that might lead to such a thing."

"I remember reading one case of the kind you mention, Mr. Warwick, but I thought it must be a newspaper yarn, for I could not see how a man could lose his usual personality completely, and become somebody else entirely, without giving evidence of mental incapacity to those with whom he was brought into contact."

"Nevertheless, such has been the fact. The instances are well authenticated. I have not heard any very satisfactory reasons advanced even by brain specialists to account for it."

Much more was said on the subject before Arthur finally took his leave of the broker, after promising to call and see his daughter within a day or two.

The boy also had a very serious talk with his mother on the same subject when he returned home, but Mrs. Gage did not favor such a supposition in connection with her husband.

If he failed to be found within a reasonable time it would only confirm her belief that he was the victim of foul play, and she would mourn him as dead.

The daily press constantly printed accounts, she said, of bodies found either in the river, or in out-of-the-way places—bodies that were never satisfactorily identified, and were in due time buried in Potter's Field.

She believed that most of these men had been murdered for the property, often inconsiderable, that they carried on their persons.

"And you think father might have met with such a fate?" asked Art.

"I dread to think of it, my son," she replied, putting her handkerchief to her eyes; "but how else am I to account for your father's strange disappearance?"

After that conversation the days passed away without any clue to Frank Gage's whereabouts being discovered by the detectives.

His description had been telegraphed to the police department of every important city in the country, as well as cabled to London, and the other large European centers, but without result.

The newspapers had dropped further reference to the matter, consigning the story to their literary "graveyards," there to await resurrection when the supposed embezzler was, if ever, captured.

Arthur visited the Morgue at intervals in order to see whether his mother's theory might be verified, but also without result.

The effacement of Frank Gage as a citizen of the world seemed to be complete.

He had vanished, 'as many a ship has done on the ocean highway, leaving not the faintest record anywhere to give the slightest hint as to his fate.

Mrs. Gage found on investigating her resources that she would have to retrench her expenses, and so she and Arthur went to live at a modest boarding house, and her son found that his school days seemed to be at a permanent end.

He would have to go to work in order to prevent himself from becoming a source of expense to his mother.

In the meantime he called several times on Bessie Warwick at her home.

The more the young people saw of each other the more they were mutually attracted.

Bessie was sure Arthur Gage was the nicest and most gentlemanly young fellow she had ever met; while the boy was equally certain that Miss Warwick was the perfection of feminine loveliness.

On one of these visits Art told Bessie that the reduced circumstances of his mother made it necessary for him to go to work, and that he intended to look for a position right away.

"My father will get you one," she said. "I will speak to him myself to-night about it, and you can call at his office in the morning about ten and he will have a talk with you on the subject. I know he is very anxious to do something for you, and this will give him the opportunity."

"Thank you, Miss Bessie. You are very good to take such an interest in my affairs," replied Arthur, gratefully.

"Can I ever take too much interest in you when I consider what I owe you? I feel a great pleasure in being able to make some slight return for your goodness to me on that dreadful night, of which my poor arm is a constant reminder. It will be some time yet before I shall be able to use it, and every time I look at it I think of you."

Arthur felt a thrill of pleasure to think that he should be so often in the thoughts of so lovely a little girl, and he said as much to her, which brought a rosy blush to her cheeks.

"I hope you won't desert me when you get to work," she said, laughingly, as he arose to go. "I shall expect you to call on me one evening a week, if you will. Remember I am always at home to you."

"Thank you, Miss Bessie. I shall not fail to take advantage of your permission. Shall we make it Wednesday evening?"

"That will suit me. And," with another blush, "I think you might drop the Miss and call me just Bessie."

"I will if you will drop the Mr. Gage, which sounds odd to me, and call me Art or Arthur."

She flashed a bewitching glance at him and said she would.

Then he went home feeling happier than he had been since he left Berkeley Academy.

CHAPTER IV.

ARTHUR GAGE GOES TO WORK IN WALL STREET.

Next morning Arthur called on Mr. Warwick at his office.

The broker was expecting him, for Bessie had mentioned

to him, that Arthur was on the lookout for a situation, and she asked her father to get him a place.

"I will give him a position in my office," Mr. Warwick said. "My messenger has given me notice of his intention to leave at the end of the week, and he shall have the place. After that I will advance him as fast as circumstances warrant."

So when Art appeared at the office the broker offered him the post of messenger.

Our hero gratefully accepted the place and was told he could begin at once by acquainting himself with the duties of the position.

The broker introduced him to the retiring messenger, who was instructed to take Arthur around with him on his errands, and give him all the points necessary to enable him to start out in good shape on the succeeding Monday.

The present messenger's name was Tom Bradley, and the two boys were soon on excellent terms.

Tom's first errand took him to the Mills Building, and the boys went out together.

On their way there Tom met another messenger, a chum of his named Bob Pickering, and he introduced Art to him.

"This is my successor, Bob," he said. "I hope you two will be good friends."

"I guess we will," replied Bob, who liked Art's style and appearance. "At any rate, it won't be my fault if we aren't."

"Nor mine," said Arthur, who had taken an instant liking to Pickering.

"Where do you live?" asked Bob.

Art told him.

"I live in Harlem, too, and not such a great way from you," replied Bob. "Just from school?"

"Yes. I have been attending Berkeley Academy, up the State, but had to leave owing to circumstances over which I had no control."

"Was it a military academy?"

"No. It was a select school where boys are prepared for college."

"Then you expected to go to college?"

"Yes. My father intended to send me to Princeton."

Bob guessed that the circumstances over which Art said he had no control meant his father's death, but he did not feel as if he ought to ask his new friend whether it was so or not.

"And now, instead of going to college, you're going to work in Wall Street?" he said.

"Yes," answered Arthur.

"Well, you'll learn a great deal more wisdom and horse-sense in the financial district than you'd ever pick up at college," said Bob. "College is all right for dudes who have rich fathers to place them in fat berths when they graduate, but for chaps who have to depend on themselves it is four years wasted in my opinion. By the time you reach the age that you would have graduated from Princeton you will be well along on the road to a practical business education. That's better than all the Latin and Greek, and other frills, they teach you at college."

"I don't altogether agree with you, Pickering," replied Art. "There is more in a college education than you seem to think. I don't mean in regard to the frills, as you call

them, but in the solid groundwork you secure on which to build your future success in life."

"Pooh!" said Bob. "The woods are full of college graduates, and so are the city parks. Some fellows may make a success of it, but lots, after passing through the regular course, can't earn their salt."

"They probably wouldn't be able to earn it anyway. It's what's in a fellow that counts, but a good education helps to bring it out."

"Is that so? Well, some of our smartest men never had much education, let alone a college one. Perhaps you think they'd have been smarter if they'd had one."

"Oh, choke off, Bob! We can't hold a debating seance on Broad Street in business hours. Come on, Gage. You can have it out with Pickering some other time."

Bob grinned and started off along his route, while Tom and Art hastened toward the Mills Building.

Art accompanied Tom Bradley on all his errands for the balance of the week, and Tom made him wise to the ins and outs of the messenger business, so that when the latter bade good-by to the office on Saturday noon Art felt quite competent to take up his duties and carry them out right up to the handle.

Mr. Warwick carried on quite a large business in stocks and bonds.

He had half a dozen clerks, including a chief bookkeeper and cashier.

He seldom went to the Stock Exchange himself, one of his clerks, a smoothly-shaven man of about thirty, with a saturnine expression, named Sol Eccles, attending to the buying and selling of stocks on the floor for him.

Art liked everybody in the office but Eccles.

Somehow or another he distrusted this man.

He couldn't have explained why, but he did, just the same.

First impressions went a great way with him, and his first impression of Eccles was not favorable.

Apparently Eccles took a similar dislike to the new messenger.

When Art carried messages to him at the Exchange he would snatch them from the boy's hand, and nine times out of ten favor him with an unpleasant look.

In the office he treated Art superciliously, and often roughly, which only served to widen the breach between them.

None of the clerks, for that matter, were especially good friends of Eccles.

They didn't fancy him much, but were so used to his manner as to pay very little attention to him.

About the only one outside Mr. Warwick that Eccles took his hat off to, as it were, was the new stenographer, Miss Elsie Richards, who had only been working in the office for three weeks.

He was particularly gracious to her, and everybody noticed it.

Art had been about ten days in the office when coming to work one morning he saw Miss Richards tripping down Wall Street ahead of him.

Just as she was about to cross Nassau Street an automobile rolled down into Wall so close to the girl that she sprang back with a little cry of affright.

In doing so she hurt her ankle and fell to the walk.

Art sprang to her aid and assisted her on her feet.

"Oh, thank you, Arthur," she said, gratefully. "I'm so glad you were near to help me. I'm afraid I have hurt my ankle."

"That's too bad, Miss Richards," said Art, sympathetically. "Allow me to assist you to the office."

She attempted to walk, but gave a cry of pain and would have fallen again only that the young messenger supported her with his strong arm.

"What shall I do?" Elsie asked, tearfully.

"You must get to the office at once," replied Art. "You have evidently sprained your ankle, and it must be seen to at once before it swells up."

"But I can't walk."

"I'll fix that."

Art whistled to a cabman across the street.

The man drove up.

"This young lady has injured her foot. I want you to carry her half-way down the block to the Burling Building."

Art opened the door of the cab, assisted Elsie in and took his seat beside her.

The cab rattled down to the building.

Art sprang out, handed the driver a quarter for his trouble, and taking the girl in his arms carried her to the elevator, which quickly carried her to the next floor, where the office was.

Then he carried her inside.

Putting her down in her chair, in her den, he said that a cold water bandage must be immediately applied to her ankle.

"That's the way we did at our school when we sprained our ankles. I'll call in Miss Hazen from next door, if she has arrived, to do it for you, and you'll be all right in a little while."

Art found Miss Hazen in her office just taking off her hat.

He told her what was wanted and chased her into Mr. Warwick's office to carry out his directions.

As Miss Richards had a little room in a corner all to herself, this "first aid to the injured" could be carried out satisfactorily and promptly without any trouble and without attracting any notice.

After Miss Hazen had fixed her up, and promised to return in an hour to renew the application, as per Art's orders, Art went into Miss Richards' room and told her he would inform Mr. Warwick about her injury, so that he would not expect her to come to the private office to take dictation that morning.

"You'll be all right by noon. Nothing like taking such things in time. It saves a whole lot of trouble. If your ankle had been allowed to swell you'd have had to be taken home in a carriage and might have been laid up for several days."

"You've been very kind, indeed, Arthur, and I thank you very much," replied the stenographer, gratefully.

"That's all right," answered Art, in his breezy way. "Glad to be of service to you or anybody else when I can. I'll take the cover off your machine for you. Now, you can start in with your work. I'll drop in and help you out in any way I can."

Art told the clerks that Miss Richards had sprained her

ankle and they mustn't expect her to bring them any work she did for them.

"You must go in and get it yourself, understand?"

They understood.

When the broker reached the office Art told him about the stenographer's temporary disablement, so Mr. Warwick, when ready to dictate his letters, went into the girl's den and did it there.

Miss Hazen did not forget to look after her patient that morning, and after making a third cold water application reported to Art that she guessed Miss Richards was about all right.

As a matter of fact, Elsie walked out of her den about one o'clock to all appearances cured, and she told Miss Hazen, when that young lady looked in a little later, that she owed her prompt recovery to Arthur's energetic efforts on her behalf.

Miss Hazen agreed with her, and added that she thought the young messenger was the nicest boy in the building.

Perhaps Elsie thought so, too, but she didn't say so.

She thanked Art again before he left the office for the day, and after that they were on very excellent terms.

CHAPTER V.

THE WELLS, FARGO & CO. EXPRESS PACKAGE.

"Hello, doctor," said Bob Pickering next day when he met Art in the corridor, for Bob worked in the same office with Miss Hazen.

"What do you mean by doctor?" asked Gage.

"Didn't you treat your stenographer yesterday for a sprained ankle?"

"I gave directions to Miss Hazen how to fix her up."

"Well, that's medical advice, isn't it?"

"In a small way, yes. It's a treatment we used at the academy and everybody knows it's the quickest and best thing to do under the circumstances."

"How much do you charge a visit?" grinned Bob.

"Oh, go on! What's the use of kidding me?"

"Nothing like jollyng a chap once in awhile. How are you getting on with Eccles?"

"Not very well. He and I don't pull very well."

"I'm not surprised. It was the same way with Tom Bradley. He had several scraps with him. The trouble with Eccles is that he thinks too much of himself."

"I'm not worrying about Mr. Eccles. I like the rest of the bunch all right."

"Oh, they are nice chaps. I guess you're pretty solid with Miss Richards now."

"Yes, we're good friends. How are you and Miss Hazen?"

"We pull like a house afire, but we have our little scraps just the same."

"How is that? She looks to me to be pretty even tempered."

"So she is; but you see she's got a mash on the next floor and I tease the life out of her about him, and that gets her mad."

"I should think it would. How would you like it yourself?"

"I haven't got a girl, and don't want one. By the way, I got a letter this morning from Tom. He's getting along

fine in his new job. I'll show it to you when I meet you after three. Now I must be getting on."

Soon after Art returned to his chair in the waiting room Eccles returned from the Exchange and went in to see Mr. Warwick.

After he came out of the private office he made a bee-line for the stenographer's den.

A moment later Mr. Warwick rang for Art.

"Take this paper to Miss Richards, Arthur. Tell her to make a manifold copy and bring it in to me," said the broker.

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, starting for the counting room.

When he opened the door of Miss Richards' little room he found Sol Eccles standing alongside of the girl talking in his most fascinating way.

He was evidently not making much of an impression on the girl, who seemed to be embarrassed by his presence.

He glowered at Art because of the interruption.

"What do you want in here?" he snarled.

"I came on business," replied the young messenger, curtly.

"Well, attend to your business and get out."

"I intend to, Mr. Eccles. This is a rush job, Miss Richards. Mr. Warwick is waiting for it."

"I'll do it right away," she replied. "I'm afraid, Mr. Eccles, I'll have to ask you to leave, as I'm very busy."

"Oh, you don't want to get rid of me," laughed Eccles. "It isn't often that I get the chance to enjoy a little of your society."

"Won't you please go? I can't work while you are in here," insisted the girl.

Art understood the situation and opened the door.

"What did you do that for?" demanded Eccles, seeing that Art did not leave the little room himself.

"So you could walk out," replied the boy, coolly.

"Just mind your own business, you little whippersnapper," retorted Eccles, in a furious tone.

"Miss Richards asked you to go, and I should think you'd take the hint," replied Art, who saw that the stenographer wanted to get rid of the clerk.

Eccles turned on Art like a wild animal and slapped him in the face.

The next moment he got a smash in the jaw that sent him staggering out of the door.

Then Art shut the door in his face.

Eccles tore it open and shook his fist at the boy.

"I'll have you discharged for that," he roared, in a rage. "I'll report your conduct to Mr. Warwick. He'll put you out, or I'll go myself."

"All right, report me," replied Art. "You can't ride rough-shod over me even if you are one of the oldest and most important clerks in the office."

"I'll fix you, you infernal young monkey," replied Eccles, starting for the private office madder than a whole nest of disturbed hornets.

"I'm sorry that you have got into trouble on my account," said Elsie, with a concerned look.

"Pooh! The man was annoying you, wasn't he?"

"Yes. I don't like him to come in here."

"That's what I thought. It struck me that I'd help you to get rid of him."

"You're very kind, Arthur, but I don't want to be the cause of getting you into trouble," she said, earnestly.

"Don't you worry. Eccles isn't the whole thing here. He can't hurt me any."

"I hope not."

In the meantime Eccles rushed into the private office and demanded Art's discharge on the ground of impertinence, and for striking him in the face.

Mr. Warwick was rather surprised, and told his clerk he'd look into the matter.

"Well, if he doesn't go, I will," replied Eccles, angrily, as he left the room.

When Art brought the manifold copy of the paper to him the broker asked him what was the trouble between him and Eccles.

"Did you strike him in the face?"

"I did, after he slapped me on the cheek. The trouble with him is he's too fresh with Miss Richards. When I went into her room with that paper he was talking to her. She asked him in my presence to leave, as she was busy, and so I opened the door for him. He got mad at that and turned on me. Miss Richards will tell you about it if you ask her."

"Very well, Arthur; that is all," replied the broker, who later on questioned the girl about the trouble, and she told him the truth.

Art had hardly taken his seat outside again before the door opened and in walked Miss Bessie Warwick.

He jumped up and said he was awfully glad to see her in Wall Street.

"I thought I'd call and see how you are getting on, Arthur."

"Thanks. I'm getting on famously. Just had a scrap with one of the head clerks," he said, laughingly.

"What about, you bad boy?"

"About the stenographer. He was annoying her. She asked him to leave her den, and he didn't seem to want to do so, so I chipped in and suggested that he fade away. That got his mad up and he tried to make things lively for me, but I think I made them more lively for him. Then he reported me to your father."

"Which clerk was it?" asked Bessie.

"Mr. Sol Eccles."

"I don't like him. He attends to the business at the Exchange, I believe."

"He's the only person in the office that I haven't been able to get on with, and there isn't much likelihood that we ever will be on better terms."

"The young lady is papa's new stenographer, isn't she?"

"Yes."

"Is she pretty?"

"Rather, but she's not in it with you, Bessie."

"You ridiculous boy!" exclaimed Miss Warwick, with a pleased smile and a blush. "Is papa in?"

"Yes. Shall I announce you?"

"Oh, no. I'll just run in and surprise him."

And she did.

When she came out after a few minutes, Art saw her to the elevator and bade her good-by.

Business was kind of slack that week, and Eccles was not as busy as usual at the Exchange.

That was one reason he had found the time to hang around the stenographer's room that morning.

After making his complaint against Art he went back to his post.

Soon after the boy returned from his lunch a Wells, Fargo & Co. expressman came in and left a small and valuable package for Mr. Warwick.

It contained a sum of money from an out-of-town customer.

Art signed for it and took it into the private room.

The broker had gone to his own lunch, so Art laid the package on his desk.

Shortly afterward the cashier called him over and asked him to go into the private room and get a certain financial pamphlet from a pile that stood on Mr. Warwick's private safe.

Art entered the room, and noting that the book he wanted was on top of the pile, reached for it.

Instead of grasping it he only succeeded in knocking it off, and it fell behind the safe.

"If that wouldn't make you mad!" muttered the young messenger. "I wonder if I'll be able to fish it out?"

There was a two-foot ruler on top of the broker's desk.

Art got it, and kneeling down in the shadow of the safe, began prodding for the pamphlet.

While he was thus employed the door opened and Eccles walked into the room.

Art saw him, but he didn't notice the young messenger.

He was about to go out again when he observed the Wells, Fargo & Co. package.

He picked it up, noted the value marked in the corner, and stood a moment in an irresolute way.

Then he went and closed the partly-open door, took a knife from his pocket, deftly slit open the end of the package and extracted a pile of bills.

He quickly folded a piece of newspaper that he took from his pocket and inserted it in the place of the bills.

Then he pasted the end of the package up again with mucilage.

He placed the money in his pocket and started to leave the room.

He paused with his hand on the door, came back, and, lifting the end of the rug, placed the money under it.

After that he walked out of the room.

Art saw the whole performance, and was dumfounded.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXTINGUISHMENT OF SOL ECCLES.

"Well, if that doesn't beat creation I'm a Dutchman!" exclaimed Art, as he recovered from his surprise. "I never thought Sol Eccles was as bad as that. That is about the nerviest bit of robbery I ever heard tell of. I wonder why he hid the money under the rug? I should think he'd have carried it off in his pocket. He started to do it, and then for some reason reconsidered the matter. He's a bird! I guess Mr. Warwick will have a fit when I tell him what Eccles did."

Art recommenced poking for the book and finally pulled it out from behind the safe.

He took it out and handed it to the cashier.

He saw Eccles talking to one of the clerks.

"Here," said the cashier to Art, "go out and get me a box of these pens."

The boy took the money and hurried off to a near-by stationer's.

When he got back the cashier was not at his desk, nor was Eccles in sight.

The door of the private office was partly open and he heard voices in somewhat excited conversation in there.

The cashier came to the door and called him inside.

Mr. Warwick was at his desk with the opened Wells, Fargo & Co. packet lying before him on the desk.

"Arthur," asked the broker, "did you receive this package from the expressman and put it on my desk?"

"Yes, sir."

"When?"

"About three-quarters of an hour ago."

"Was it in perfect shape when you signed for it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were you in the waiting room from that time until Mr. Gray sent you on an errand to the stationer's?"

"Yes, sir, except for a few minutes when I came in here to get a pamphlet off the safe that Mr. Gray sent me for."

"I suppose nobody was in this room, to your knowledge, but yourself."

"Mr. Eccles was in here."

"I? Not much, I wasn't," said Eccles, unblushingly.

"You weren't, eh?" replied Art. "Well, I saw you in here, just the same."

"What's that?" snarled Eccles. "How dare you lie to Mr. Warwick?"

"I am not lying," replied the boy, stoutly. "You're the one that's doing the lying."

"You young villain!" roared Eccles, making a menacing move toward the young messenger. "How dare you talk to me that way?"

"You'll hear something worse than that in a moment or two," replied Art.

"Tut, tut!" interposed the broker, impatiently. "You say you saw Mr. Eccles in this room while I was out?"

"Yes, sir."

"But Mr. Eccles says he was not in here."

"I can't help what he says, sir. I saw him as plainly as I see you."

The broker looked puzzled, the cashier and another clerk looked astonished, while Eccles himself looked flushed and angry.

"Mr. Warwick," ejaculated Eccles, "that boy is a born liar. It must have been him who tampered with that package, stole the money, and is now trying to throw suspicion on me."

"Mr. Warwick," said Art, "I saw Mr. Eccles take that express package off your desk, cut it open, take out a bunch of money and substitute a sheet of newspaper that he took from his pocket. Then he pasted the end up with mucilage and put it back on your desk. Now you know what kind of trusted employee Mr. Eccles is."

With a howl of rage Eccles made a dash at Art, but the cashier and clerk seized him by the arms and held him back.

Arthur's bold accusation startled and astonished the broker, just as it amazed the other two men.

"This is a very serious statement you are making," said Mr. Warwick, gravely.

"I know it, sir, and it is true."

"Where were you at the time?"

"Behind the safe."

"What were you doing there?"

"Trying to fish out the pamphlet that Mr. Gray asked me to bring him. It had fallen between the safe and the wall."

"What have you to say to this, Eccles?" asked the broker.

"I say it's a barefaced lie. If you imagine I took that money you are at liberty to search me," replied the clerk.

"You wouldn't find the money on him, sir. I saw him hide it in this room."

"Then you know where it is?" said the broker, with an air of relief.

"Yes, sir. See," said Arthur, raising the corner of the rug and exposing a number of bills, "here is the money he took."

Sol Eccles was furious.

He tried to spring at the young messenger, but was prevented by the two clerks.

Art collected the money and handed it to Mr. Warwick, who counted it and found that the amount tallied with the sum the package ought to have contained.

Then he took up the piece of newspaper which Eccles had substituted for the bills and looked it carefully over.

"Mr. Eccles," he said, "Arthur accuses you of putting this paper into the package in place of the money which he also says you took out. Did you ever see that piece of paper before?"

"Certainly not. I don't know anything about it. That boy has trumped up that story for the purpose of getting me in trouble. What he accuses me of doing he did himself. Is it reasonable to suppose that, if I had taken the money, I would place it under that rug? I think my word, considering the length of time I have been in this office, ought to be better than his."

"If you didn't see this paper before, or know nothing about it, how does it happen that it bears your name and your address?"

Eccles was staggered.

But he soon recovered himself.

"He wrote that himself as part of his scheme to put me in a hole," he said.

The broker asked his cashier several questions about Eccles, but nothing that Mr. Gray said incriminated the clerk.

"Do you know Mr. Eccles' house address, Arthur?"

"No, sir. I haven't the least idea where he lives."

"Very well. Gentlemen," he said, turning to the others, "you can go. And you can go, too, Mr. Eccles."

Left alone with Arthur, the broker questioned him very closely about the express package, and was finally satisfied that Eccles was guilty of the abstraction of the money, and that his purpose in hiding it was not to have it about his person during office hours, from prudent motives.

Of course there could be only one course for him to pursue toward his trusted clerk, and that was to discharge him, so he summoned Eccles before him, and after a sharp talk told him that he would have to dispense with his services.

"Then you accept that boy's word in preference to mine?" gritted Eccles.

"I am compelled to, as his story is clear and straightforward, while your actions and denials are not those of a square man. Get your week's wages from the cashier and go."

"You will regret this treatment of me some day, Mr. Warwick," said Eccles, darkly.

"Do you mean that as a threat, Eccles?" demanded the broker, sharply.

"You can take it in any sense you choose," replied the man, recklessly.

"You ought to be glad that I have not caused your arrest for looting the package."

"Indeed," sneered Eccles. "I think you would find it a hard matter to prove that I had anything to do with it. My denial is as good as that boy's story, which is a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end."

"That will do, Eccles. You can go."

The clerk looked daggers at the broker and then left the room.

As soon as he reached the waiting room he walked up to Arthur and shook his fist in his face.

"I'm going to make you pay dearly for this, you young villain," he hissed, vindictively. "I've lost my position in this office through you, and I mean to make you sweat for it."

"Thanks," replied Art. "I'm not afraid of you."

"Aren't you? We'll see about that. I have just learned who you are. You're the son of Frank Gage, the man who embezzled half a million from the Atlas Trust Co. and fled with it. Mr. Warwick is welcome to such a messenger as you—the son of a thief!"

"You're a liar and a cur!" cried Art, springing at Eccles and striking him to the floor. "If you don't take that word back I'll break every bone in your body!"

In a moment the office was in a state of confusion.

The cashier rushed out of the counting room and grabbed the excited boy, while Mr. Warwick came to his door to ascertain the cause of the racket.

Eccles got on his feet in a towering rage, and attempted to strike Art, but one of the clerks interposed between them.

The broker wanted an explanation of the row, and Arthur gave it to him.

"You deserved all you got, Eccles, for insulting the boy. It has never been proved that his father took one cent of the trust company's funds, and you had no right to apply such an epithet to his name. I do not need anything more to convince me that I have been greatly deceived in your character. Get your money from Mr. Gray and leave my office at once."

Eccles got his week's wages and departed with a scowl on his countenance.

CHAPTER VII.

ARTHUR'S FIRST WINNING IN THE STOCK MARKET.

The departure of Sol Eccles was not attended by any evidence of regret on the part of the other employees of Mr. Warwick.

Miss Richards was especially pleased to be relieved of his attentions, which had been displeasing to her.

Art was glad he was gone, because he was the only inharmonious element in the office.

What Eccles meant to do to him in the way of revenge he couldn't say, and he did not care.

He was confident he was abundantly able to take care of himself.

Gradually, as the days merged into weeks, and the weeks into months, he forgot all about Eccles.

That individual did not seek to connect himself with another Wall Street firm, or, if he did, he failed to catch on, for he was not seen in the district again after his departure from Mr. Warwick's office.

Art grew more and more interested in Wall Street affairs and methods as time slipped by, and he decided that eventually he meant to become a broker himself.

It was a money-making business, and money was what Art, like everybody else, was looking for.

He called regularly once a week on Bessie Warwick, and was a very welcome visitor at her home.

His mother also became quite friendly with Mrs. Warwick, and occasionally they were both invited to an informal dinner or reception.

One evening when Art called on Bessie he began to talk glowingly about the chances that Wall Street offered a shrewd and prudent operator to make a fortune.

"I've saved something over \$100, Bessie, so far, and I'm going to try my luck at the first chance, just to see how I will come out. I've made a whole lot of imaginary deals on paper. Had they been real ones I'd be worth about \$100,000 now."

"What a funny boy you are, Arthur," laughed Bessie. "Why, papa says that the stock market is the greatest game of chance in existence. He says it is almost as bad as the old lotteries. In fact, he doesn't know anything more risky, unless it is betting on horse races."

"Well, your father ought to know all about it. He's been in the business long enough to discover all the tricks of the trade; but the fact that he's grown wealthy out of it backs up my statement that there is plenty of money to be made in Wall Street."

"Papa doesn't speculate much. He lets his customers do that."

"Of course. If people didn't speculate the brokers wouldn't make much in the way of commissions, because it is only those who have plenty of money who can afford to buy and hold shares of stocks as an investment. Most of the commissions are made in the margin transactions, which is a short road to wealth or the poor house. However, as I said before, I think if a person studies the market well, buying stocks only when they are down, and selling when they go up, he ought to make good money."

"But papa says the market is continually fluctuating. That an outsider hardly knows where he is at from one day to another."

"That's true enough if you go recklessly into speculation. Most people do not study the situation before they plunge in. They see in the papers that a certain stock is rising and they buy, expecting to sell when it gets higher. It's a pure gamble with them. Just as if I tossed a coin in the air and you were to bet that it would come down either heads or tails. In fact, it is worse than that, for the chances are even that you will win or lose on the toss of the coin, since

it is bound to turn up either a head or a tail, and you know it will. It requires no study to figure that fact out. I have discovered, however, that the stock market is full of all kinds of surprises for the speculator, even when he works on a system, and when all indications point to cutting a melon, he is liable to be handed a lemon."

"If you have learned all this, and it quite agrees with papa's ideas, what makes you think that you could make money where so many other people fail?"

"Well, I couldn't exactly tell you why I think so, but I do. I often run across pointers, which I have followed up on paper, and had I invested money on the strength of them I should have won out. Now, for instance, I heard to-day that there is a combination forming to boom C. & D. stock. I couldn't swear as to the truth of it, but I got the information from what I consider a reliable source. Ever since I've been thinking whether I hadn't better invest my hundred odd on margin and see how I will come out."

"I wouldn't if I were you," replied Bessie, shaking her head. "One hundred dollars in a savings bank is worth several hundred in the bushes."

"Well, suppose we see how the thing turns out, just for fun?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean this: C. & D. is selling at 46 to-day. Get me a piece of paper and I'll put it down."

Bessie brought him a sheet of note paper and he wrote the thing down with the date.

"Now, every morning look at the stock report in the paper. Look for C. & D. and see whether it goes up or down in the next week or ten days. Just imagine that you have bought 1,000 shares at 46, and put up \$4,600 in margin. Every time the price advances or falls a point consider yourself in or out \$1,000. If C. & D. is quoted as low as 42 any morning you can figure that you are next door to being wiped out of your \$4,600, and that if your deal was a real one you'd have to put up more margin or the chances are your name would be Tim Flynn. If, on the contrary, C. & D. is quoted as high as 56, you may consider yourself \$10,000 winner, less commissions and other expenses, of course, which might amount to \$300."

"That will be fun," said Bessie, catching on to the idea. "I'll do it. It will be like playing a new game."

When Art called on Bessie on the following Wednesday evening, just a week hence, he asked her with sparkling eyes how C. & D. was.

"It's gone up," she said. "Wait till I get the paper. I've put down the price every day. I know it's over 50 now."

She ran off to get the paper, and presently returned with it to show him.

"It's 58 3-8."

"Yes. That's what it closed at last night, but it opened 58 7-8 this morning, and I sold the 20 shares I bought for 61 1-4."

"Did you really buy 20 shares?" she asked, in surprise.

"I did. I bought them last Thursday morning at 46. After talking with you on the subject the night before I finally decided to take the risk. Well, the risk has turned me in \$300 in profits."

"Gracious!" she exclaimed, delightedly. "You were lucky."

"My pointer turned out all right, didn't it?"

"It did, indeed. I must tell papa how fortunate you were."

"Not on your life, Bessie! Don't say a word to him about it."

"Why not?" she asked, in surprise.

"He might not like it. There is a kind of unwritten law in Wall Street that employees are not to speculate in the market. I don't want your father to know that I broke it. I don't suppose he'd call me down about it, but he might possibly hand me out a mild lecture on the subject, and so it's just as well that he didn't know anything about it. So you won't say anything on the subject, will you?"

"Of course not, if you don't wish me to."

"That's right. I'm \$300 ahead of the game and I've brought you a two-pound box of bon-bons for you to help me celebrate the event."

"Aren't you good!" cried Bessie, when he produced the candy, for she had a sweet tooth, like all girls.

"The next time I win there'll be more bon-bons for you," grinned Art.

"Then I wish you'd win every week," laughed Bessie.

"I'd soon be a millionaire if I did that."

"I suppose you hope to be one some day, don't you?"

"Sure, I do. Let's have some music. Got any new songs?"

"I got two new ones to-day."

"I want to hear them."

"I haven't practiced them yet."

"Then practice them now. We'll both practice them. I suppose the people next door won't mind!"

"Why, the idea! Just as if they would, or could hear us," said Bessie, going over to the fine upright piano.

"Is that the latest song?"

"One of the latest, I believe," she replied, beginning to play the opening bars.

"I know another that I'm going to buy you."

"What is the name of it?"

He told her.

"That's a comic song, I suppose. I'll let you sing that when you bring it."

Bessie sang the new song very sweetly, and Art joined in the chorus after she sang it once so that he got the hang of it.

After that they sang another song.

They sang half a dozen more songs together, when the clock chimed ten and Art remarked that it was time for him to go.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARTHUR PICKS UP AN ACCIDENTAL TIP AND PUTS IT TO GOOD USE.

It might have been a week later that Art carried a note to the office of one of the big operators in Wall Street.

He found the gentleman in the private office of his regular broker.

Art handed him the note, which the operator read and then scribbled a reply on a pad and handed it to him.

As the boy was walking out of the room he heard the gentleman say to his broker:

"You can go on the floor now and buy every share that is offered."

"Any limit as to price?" asked the broker.

"Follow the market till I tell you to stop."

"All right," answered the trader. "I'll get over to the Exchange at once."

When Art got outside he began to consider the meaning of that brief conversation he had overheard.

"I'll bet Mr. Bagley is trying to corner some stock," he thought. "He's always up to some game of that kind. That's the way he makes his millions, and I've heard that he's worth a barrel of money. I'd give something to know what particular stock he's going to boom now. If I could find out I'd be able to make another haul in the market. Ah, I know how I might get on to it. I'll keep my eye out for Mr. Parsons, his broker, the next time I'm sent to the Exchange, which may be as soon as I return to the office, and see what stock he is buying. Whatever stock he's taking in will probably be the one that Mr. Bagley is after. Then all I'll have to do will be to back that stock until it goes up like C. & D. did. It makes all the difference in the world with a deal."

It happened that Art was sent to the Stock Exchange soon after he got back, and while waiting at the railing for Mr. Warwick's representative on the floor to show up, he looked around among the crowd of brokers for Mr. Parsons.

There were so many bunches of traders, however, that he couldn't make out the man he was after at all, and so after delivering his note he left the Exchange much disappointed.

He had another note to deliver at Exchange Place.

As he was passing the main entrance to the Exchange two well-known traders came out together.

"What do you suppose Parsons is buying L. & M. for?" asked one.

"Search me," replied the other. "Maybe for some syndicate that's going to boom it, or maybe only for some of his customers."

"He seems to be taking in all he can——"

That was all Art heard, but it answered his purpose.

He knew the Parsons referred to must be Mr. Bagley's broker, for there was only one trader of that name in the Street.

If Parsons was buying largely of L. & M., as the brief conversation of the two brokers indicated, then L. & M. was the stock that Bagley was interested in.

"I guess it's L. & M., all right," mused Art. "I must look it up when I get back to the office."

He did, and found that it was going around 40.

He considered the matter for the rest of his working hours, and when he left the office for home he went to a little banking establishment on Nassau Street, which made a specialty of dealing in stock for small speculators, and invested the greater part of his small capital in the necessary margin to secure 100 shares of L. & M. at the closing price of that day, namely 41.

"This is where I make more money or go clean broke, I suppose," he told himself, as he took a car for home. "Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained. There is no money to be made in Wall Street without taking some risk. When a fellow has a tip, however, the risk is cut in half."

A few days later L. & M. had advanced in the market to

44, and Art, who had naturally kept his eye on it, felt pretty good.

But he expected that it would go much higher than that.

The boom, if there was going to be one, hadn't started yet.

Next morning he ran into Bob Pickering.

"Hello, Art. Bound for the Exchange?" he asked.

"Sure thing."

"There's a whole lot of fun over there this morning."

"What about?"

"Some stock, I think it's L. & M., is going up like a house afire."

"That so?" replied Art, in some excitement. "That's fine."

"What do you care?"

"A whole lot."

"How?"

"Because I'm interested."

"In what?"

"L. & M."

"How do you mean?"

"I bought a few shares of it the other day on a five per cent. margin."

"The dickens you did! How much did you pay for it?"

"Forty-one."

"You're in luck. It was going around 48 when I left the Exchange, and I'll bet it's higher now. How came you to buy that particular stock?"

"Because I had an idea it was going up."

"How did you get that idea?"

"Say, you're a regular interrogation point this morning. How do you suppose a fellow gets ideas?"

"I didn't know but somebody tipped you off."

"I haven't met anybody yet that's kind enough to do that. Tips seem to be scarce in my locality."

"They're not very plentiful among us messenger boys. I've been three years in the Street and I haven't collared a real good one yet."

"Oh, they're to be got if you know where to look for them, or should happen to be 'round when one escapes accidentally."

"If any escape they don't get very far before somebody takes them in tow, bet your life. Well, so long. I must get back to the office or I'll get my whiskers pulled."

Art hurried on into the Exchange, where he found the floor greatly excited over the sudden rise in L. & M.

It had gone up five points since ten o'clock, and from the looks of things it bid fair to go up more than that by three.

Brokers that had passed it up the day before were hot-foot after it because of the demand in sight.

They were probably kicking themselves because they had not been able to foresee what was only known to the initiated.

If traders only had the gift of second sight at times they would be as happy as clams at high tide.

While Art was at the Exchange L. & M. went up a whole point, so the boy made \$100 without doing a thing toward it.

The mob around the standard of that particular stock was by far the largest on the floor.

A forest of arms was being continually waved at some

man in the center of the ring, and every once in awhile he said something that Art couldn't hear.

Finally, while the boy stood at the rail, there came a lull in the trading, which was used by the brokers in comparing trades.

While they were attending to this the boy left the Exchange.

That day L. & M. went to 52, and Art went home feeling that he was worth \$1,500 all told, including the money he had put up on margin.

That was his calling night on Bessie, so after supper he put on his best suit and went to her house to see her.

Of course she was expecting him.

If he hadn't called that evening she wouldn't have done a thing to him the next time she saw him, for the heiress of her father's worldly wealth, she was accustomed to have things come her way, and when for some reason they didn't there was usually something doing.

She couldn't be called a spoiled child, for she was a sensible young miss and had a pretty level head on her two lovely shoulders, but she liked to have her own sweet way, and nobody outside her own father and mother, ever dared to take the liberty of crossing her imperious will.

She always had her mother's maid pay particular attention to her toilet on the evenings when Art was slated to arrive, and consequently she always presented a picture of bewitching loveliness when she came into the room to greet him.

At any rate, he thought there wasn't another girl that could hold a candle to her, and sometimes he caught himself wondering who would have the honor of paying her homage in the dim and misty future.

"I've brought you another box of bon-bons," he said to her soon after his arrival. "I suppose your sweet tooth is in working order."

"It always is. I do love bon-bons."

"Do you? I wish I was a bon-bon, then," he said, with considerable nerve.

"Why do you wish that, you foolish boy?"

"Because then you'd love me, don't you see?"

Bessie blushed clear up to her hair.

Art saw her confusion and promptly changed the subject.

"I'm in the market again."

"Do you mean that you've been buying stock?"

"That's what I mean. I'm in on L. & M. Bought it at 41 and it's now up to 51. I got 100 shares, consequently my profit at this moment may easily be calculated at \$1,100, less commissions and interest. How is that?"

"You are fortunate. I'm so glad!"

"Thanks, Bessie. But I'm not out of the woods yet. I haven't sold out my shares, and to-morrow I might have a different and not quite as pleasant tale to tell."

"Then why don't you sell? A bird in the hand is worth——"

"Two in the bush—exactly. Well, I mean to sell to-morrow. I think L. & M. is good for several points more from the look of things to-day."

"You are taking too many chances, I'm afraid, Arthur. Better sell out first thing in the morning and then you'll be on the safe side. I'd feel very bad if you came up here next Wednesday and told me that your deal had gone wrong after all."

"I guess you're right, Bessie. I believe it's the hanging on for the last dollar that lets so many people out at the short end of the horn. I'll take your advice and close out first thing in the morning."

After that they talked about something else, then they had the usual songs and duets, and Art went home.

At half-past ten next morning Art was sent to the Exchange.

There was the same high jinks over L. & M. as on the preceding day, and the boy saw by the quotations on the board that the price had gone to 53 1-8.

As soon as he had delivered his note he hustled up to the little bank where he made his deal and ordered his shares sold.

This was done in a few minutes, his 100 shares fetching 53 3-8.

Half an hour later the tide turned, a bear raid was made on the stock and not being supported by the Bagley crowd, because the big operator had already got out from under, it began to drop down just as steadily as it went up, and by the time the Exchange closed it was roosting at 45.

Arthur's profit on this deal was \$1,200, making him worth \$1,600 altogether.

CHAPTER IX.

MAKING MORE MONEY.

Of course Arthur told his mother about his fortunate stock deals, and she congratulated him on his success.

"You have done remarkably well, Arthur," she said. "Your poor father, however, did not believe in speculating in stocks. He often told me that the worst thing an outsider could do was to buy stock on margin. He used to say that Wall Street was strewn with financial wrecks. That money earned by years of hard labor and economy was often lost there in an hour."

"I guess that's true enough, mother, but when people are angling for easy money they've got to take all the chances that go with it. I've not taken as desperate chances as most small speculators do because in both cases I've had the advantage of a tip, but still there is always an element of uncertainty even when you are operating with a pointer, and you've got to keep wide awake all the time."

"Well, my son, I hope you will be careful with the little fund you have acquired, and not let your success lead you into any rash investment."

"Oh, I'll look out, never fear, mother. My \$1,600 is in the office safe, and there it is going to remain until I see a safe chance of putting it to work again."

On the following Wednesday when he called on Bessie he brought her a two-pound box of bon-bons.

"That's a sign that I came out on my deal all right," he said.

"I'm glad to hear it," she said. "I was afraid something might happen to upset all your calculations."

"I got out just in time. Half an hour after I sold, the stock went on the toboggan, and there was a small panic in the Exchange. If you hadn't advised me so strongly to sell in the morning I think I might have held on too long for my own good."

"You were a good boy to heed my advice."

"You mean I was a lucky boy, for that is what it amounts

to. At any rate, you deserve something better than bon-bons, and so I've brought you a little gold locket, hoping that you will wear it sometimes just to oblige me."

"Isn't it lovely!" she cried, as Art opened a jeweler's box and showed her the black-enameled locket resting on its bed of cotton. "I'm very, very much obliged to you, Arthur, and I will wear it all the time because it came from you. Why, there's a place for a picture, isn't there? Of course you're going to give me yours to put in it, aren't you?"

"I'm afraid I am not of importance enough to be entitled to such an honor," said Art, much pleased at her suggestion.

"You ridiculous boy! If I'm going to wear your locket I want your picture in it."

"You shall have it if you really want it. I'll measure the space in the locket and have a picture taken to fit it. I'll either send it to you by mail or bring it next Wednesday evening."

That was quite satisfactory to Bessie, and she ran off to show the locket to her mother.

Next day Bob Pickering met Art in the corridor and wanted to know how he came out on the L. & M. deal.

"You didn't get caught, did you?" he said.

"Not much," replied Art. "I sold out just half an hour before the slump started in."

"You were lucky. How much did you make?"

"I made several hundred dollars," replied Art.

"You're right in it. I'd like to make a deal of that kind myself, but nothing of the kind ever comes my way. Some people are born lucky. What are you going to do with your wealth? Put it in a savings bank, or invest it again in some other rising stock?"

"I shall invest it again whenever another good chance comes my way."

Several months passed away, however, before Art saw another opportunity to try his luck again in the market, and during that interval his money lay idle in an envelope in the office safe.

One day Mr. Warwick sent him with a note to a certain big broker who had an office in Exchange Place.

The broker was very busy at the time he arrived and he found he would have to wait a few minutes.

The room was well filled with customers at the time, most of them hanging around the ticker.

Art went over to a window and amused himself looking across the well or air-shaft into a room filled with girl typewriters.

They were working away at their machines at a great rate.

Most of them were pretty, and Art was trying to determine which was the best-looking in the bunch when a couple of brokers came into the office and asked for the head of the firm.

Being told that he was busy just then, they came over within earshot of the young messenger and began talking about a pool that was being formed to boom a certain stock.

They did not mention the name of the stock, but Art, whose attention was attracted by the tenor of their conversation, heard one tell the other that Broker Parsons was going to do the buying on the Exchange when the time came.

He found out that they expected to interest the broker

for whom Art had brought the note, in the scheme, and that if they caught him it would complete the pool.

Arthur made a note of what he had heard, and a few days later he discovered that Parsons was buying up all the N. & O. stock that was offered.

This stock was going at 72, which was rather low for it, as it was a dividend payer.

After considering the chances Art bought 200 shares at that figure on a five per cent. margin, putting up \$1,440.

The upward movement in the price began on the following day, and continued to go up slowly for several days, till it reached 75.

A few days later, when the young messenger paid his first visit to the Exchange, about eleven o'clock, he found that the boom he was looking for was on.

The excitement that developed out of N. & O. exceeded that accompanying his two previous deals.

The whole Street seemed to be disturbed over the unexpected rise.

The newspapers were full of news about the stock, advancing various reasons for its sudden prominence.

The general public came flocking to Wall Street to take advantage of the market, which showed a buoyant tone all along the line.

Business, which had been slack for several weeks, now became rushing, and Art was kept on the run all day during his regular hours, and he didn't get away for an hour after his customary time.

For the balance of the week there were great times in Wall Street.

Mr. Warwick's office, in common with the offices of every other broker of consequence, was crowded with old customers and many new ones.

The clearing-house on New Street had to work overtime to keep up with the demands on its force of clerks.

In fact, night work was rather the rule than the exception in all the big brokerage houses.

Art tried to keep an eye on his deal, but it was hard for him to do so, as he didn't have a minute to himself from the time he started in in the morning until he got away after four o'clock.

At length, when N. & O. reached 87, he decided that he'd better unload before matters changed around.

With some difficulty he got his order to sell in to the little bank on Nassau Street, and after that he breathed easier.

N. & O., however, kept on up till it reached 90.

Art had his statement and check in his pocket, which showed that he had made \$3,000 profit on his deal, when he met Pickering on the street.

"You ought to have been in on this, old man," said Bob.

"How do you know but I was?" asked Art.

"I don't know. Did you buy any N. & O.?"

"I did."

"How much?"

"Enough to make quite a little profit."

"Gee! You're all right. You must be worth money."

"What I'm worth wouldn't startle Wall Street."

"I'll bet you're worth \$500 easily enough."

"Yes, I'm worth that, all right."

"I wish I was. I'd paint the town red."

"That would be a very foolish thing for you to do."

"Well, when a fellow makes a bunch of easy money he feels like spreading himself."

"That's where he's a chump. Money is money, whether it's made easy or not, and I believe in holding on to it."

When he went home Art showed his mother his check and told her that he was now worth \$4,600."

"I've done pretty well for my first year in Wall Street," he said. "I started in with a little over \$100, and in three deals I have annexed \$4,500."

His mother was very proud of his success, and told him so.

"Well, I hope to do much better in the future," said he. "When a chap is on the ground all the time like I am he sees chances that an outsider never comes within hailing distance of."

He held on to the bank's check until he had a chance to show it to Bessie, who, as usual, was pleased to death that he was a winner, and then he cashed it and stowed the money away in the office again until he wanted to use it.

CHAPTER X.

CAPTURED.

One Saturday, about noon, Mr. Warwick called Arthur into his private office and told him that he would be obliged to send him over to Staten Island.

"Mr. Gray will give you a package containing \$5,000 in bills, which you are to deliver to Mrs. George Sedgeley, whose name and address you will find on the package. She lives on the suburbs of Clifton, in a fine house standing back from the street. You will have no difficulty in finding the place, as she is very well known."

"I'll find the house all right, sir," replied Art. "When shall I start?"

"You'd better go and get your lunch now, and by the time you get back Mr. Gray will have the package ready for you."

Three-quarters of an hour later Art was on board a Broadway car bound for the Staten Island ferry.

The boat was on the point of starting when he reached the ferry house, so he did not have to wait.

He got a camp chair and seated himself on the lower deck, near the bows.

There was quite a crowd on the boat as she left her slip, and among them was Sol Eccles.

He was seated with a couple of bearded men, who looked as if they might be mechanics.

He saw Art when he came forward with his stool, but Art did not notice him.

Eccles pointed the young messenger out to his companions.

"That's the young rooster who got me fired from Warwick's office in Wall Street about a year ago. I intended to get square with him long before this, but circumstances interfered. I haven't forgot what I owe him, just the same, and it would do me a whole lot of good if I could do him up right now."

"Does he live in Staten Island?" asked one of the men.

"No. He lives up in West Ninety-third Street, or did."

"What do you s'pose brings him on this boat, then?"

"I dare say he's bound on some errand for Warwick. I wouldn't be surprised if he's carrying some money to a customer of the house, a Mrs. Sedgeley, of Clifton. This is

about the time that Warwick collects the quarterly interest on her bonds and sends it down to her."

"How much does the interest amount to?" asked the other man, glancing at his companion.

"About \$5,000."

"Does he send the amount in money or by a check?"

"Always in money."

"Then the boy may have that money with him now?"

"It is not unlikely."

"Five thousand dollars would come in very handy for the three of us," said the first man, whose name was Griffin. "Couldn't we waylay the young chap before he reaches his destination?"

"What, in broad daylight?" exclaimed Eccles, whose only objection to taking a hand in such an enterprise was the danger that appeared to surround it.

"What sort of place is Clifton?" asked Griffin.

"It's a small town overlooking the Narrows, the third from the ferry landing."

"You can get there by the trolley, I suppose?"

"Yes, or by the steam road."

"What part of the town does the woman live in?"

"On the suburbs. She's got a fine house surrounded by well laid-out grounds."

"She must be well fixed."

"She is."

"If she lives outside of the town itself we ought to be able to work the trick."

"I don't fancy the idea of trying such a dangerous game in the daytime. Besides, the boy may not be going to Mrs. Sedgeley's."

"If he isn't going that way, of course we needn't bother about him."

"I'd like to follow him and see where he is going," said Eccles. "I might find a chance to settle scores with him."

"If there's anything in it for us we'll lend you a hand," said Griffin. "But you know we've got this Miller matter to look after. That's what is taking us over to the island."

"We've got lots of time. Help me fix that boy and I'll make it right with you," said Eccles.

Griffin said he had no objection if his friend Curley had none.

Curley, thus appealed to, said that as Eccles was one of them in the Miller affair he was willing to help him out in any side issue that did not interfere with the chief object in sight.

So it was decided that Arthur Gage was to be shadowed to his destination.

Art, quite unconscious of the plotting that was going against him close by, was enjoying the sail down the bay.

He was afraid, however, from the looks of the sky ahead, that he would be caught in a rainstorm before his errand was finished.

By the time the boat reached her slip at St. George, the heavens wore quite a threatening look.

He had been directed by the cashier to take the trolley road out, as that line would take him within three blocks of Mrs. Sedgeley's residence.

Accordingly, he made a bee-line for a car as soon as the gangplank was in position for the passengers to land.

Eccles and his companions boarded the same car, the for-

mer pulling his hat well down about his eyes to prevent the boy from recognizing him, if possible.

Art didn't take particular notice of the three, especially as the car was crowded.

"I believe he is going to Clifton," Eccles whispered to Griffin.

"So much the better, if he's got the money about him. We can kill two birds with one stone. Make a haul and help you take your revenge on the kid. Getting the money away from him, if he has it, ought to satisfy you, I should think."

"I don't know but it will, for it will put him in a big hole with his boss," replied Eccles, in a tone of satisfaction.

While they were talking the car bowled merrily along its way.

Some of the passengers got off in the neighborhood of Tompkinsville, and more near Stapleton, so that the car was only about half filled as it proceeded on toward Clifton.

The sky now looked dark and sullen, and Art began to fear that he would get a soaking before he could reach his destination, which wasn't a pleasant prospect so far away from home.

As the car drew near where he was to get off it began to rain a little.

"Just my luck!" Art muttered. "It's liable to come down in bucketfuls before I get a block from the trolley, and there doesn't seem to be any shelter to speak of around this neighborhood. I'll have to stand under some big tree and take my chances."

At length the car stopped at the street crossing where he had to alight, and he got off.

Turning up the collar of his jacket, he started at a lively pace.

Eccles and his associates also got off and followed him.

The ex-clerk was now satisfied that the boy was bound for Mrs. Sedgely's, and intimated that fact to Griffin and Curley.

The three were delighted that the change in the weather was putting the game in their hands.

Art was unconsciously leading them a lively chase, much to their disgust, for they had all they could do to prevent him from distancing them.

About half the distance to Mrs. Sedgely's home had been covered when the rain began coming down in right good earnest.

Art was about to take shelter under a large oak tree when he saw a shed that looked like an abandoned blacksmith shop off to one side.

He hailed it with satisfaction, and made a break for it as fast as he could go.

Eccles and his companions followed suit.

Under the circumstances there was nothing suspicious in this move of theirs.

It looked as if they were bent on escaping the sudden downpour also.

Art saw them coming when he dashed into the shed and thought nothing of it.

They piled in after him, jumped on him and bore him to the floor.

"What the deuce are you about?" demanded the surprised and indignant boy.

"Gag him before he lets out a yell," said Eccles, who was squatting on the young messenger's legs.

Then Art woke up to the fact that his overthrow had not been accidental, as he had supposed it was, but that he had been deliberately attacked.

This was a mighty serious state of affairs for him, seeing that he carried a large sum of money about his person.

He immediately began to put up a stout resistance, and being a strong boy, he gave the three rascals a whole lot of trouble before they got his hands bound behind his back and a handkerchief tied around his mouth.

In order to prevent him from kicking, they tied his ankles together with a handkerchief provided by Eccles.

Having rendered their victim helpless, Griffin proceeded to go through his pockets, and soon pulled out the package addressed to Mrs. Sedgely.

It was too dark for them to tell whether it was what they were after, so a match was struck that Eccles might look at it.

He took the precaution to turn his back on the boy while the match was burning, for he did not care to have Art identify him.

"That's the money," he said, in a tone of satisfaction, throwing down the match.

"Good," replied Griffin. "Now, if it would only let up rainin' we could be off."

There was no prospect of an immediate stoppage in the downpour, which was descending in sheets just as if it never meant to stop.

The wind, too, was sweeping it through the air in a way that no umbrella could withstand, so that the streets were entirely deserted at that moment.

Griffin and Curley dragged Art into a corner and left him, quite satisfied that he was in no shape to give them any further trouble.

The three men then stood by the door, looking out into the rain, and talking together in low tones.

If they thought the young messenger boy was going to lie tamely in the corner without making an effort to escape from his predicament, they were greatly mistaken.

Arthur Gage wasn't built that way.

It is true that he was practically helpless as things stood, but he always went on the principle that while there's life there's hope.

Consequently the moment they left him to himself he began a persistent attempt to free himself.

Whatever noise he made was drowned by the driving rain that beat a loud tattoo on the sides of the shed.

Just what he expected to do in case he did recover the use of his limbs he did not know as yet, but he was fully resolved to recover that package of money somehow.

He felt that he was responsible for its safe delivery to Mrs. Sedgely, and to have to return to the office and report its loss would never do at all.

Mr. Warwick would hardly trust him with a similar important errand again.

And Bessie—she was bound to hear about the matter, and what would she think of him?

His wrists were bound by a handkerchief, doubly knotted, but, owing to his struggles when the job was done, Curley, who attended to it, made a bungling matter of it.

Art soon found this out, and it took him only a few minutes to release his hands.

Then he tore the gag from his mouth, and pulling out

his knife he loosened the knots of the handkerchief that held his feet.

Looking towards the three men he saw the money package sticking out of Griffin's side pocket.

The fellow was leaning in a negligent way against the side of the doorway.

Then Art looked around the interior of the shed.

At the back was a window opening without a sash or any other kind of covering.

It did not offer a very enticing means of escape from the place.

There was a hole in the ceiling through which dangled a rope right above where Art sat.

Apparently there was some kind of a loft up there.

Art figured that if he could get the package out of the rascal's pocket without attracting his attention, or that of his companions, and then had time enough to climb the rope into the loft, he would be able to stand the men off, for he did not see how they could follow him except by the rope, and he meant to haul that up after him.

Full of this idea, and favored by the darkness and the drumming of the rain against the building, he softly approached the stalwart form of Griffin.

He kept close to the wall and proceeded with the greatest caution.

At last, with bated breath, he stood close behind the rascal.

The package was within his reach, but could he lift it out of the fellow's pocket without him becoming aware of the fact?

It was a ticklish experiment, but Art was determined to get the money package at any cost.

The lounging position of the man, with his coat thrown back, favored Art.

He extended his fingers, softly gripped the end of the package and slowly and artfully drew it out of the pocket.

At last it was entirely out and in his possession, and Griffin made no move.

Dropping it into his own pocket, he made his way back to where the rope hung through the opening above.

Grasping it firmly in his hands, he began to haul himself slowly upward, hand over hand, till he was able to grip it with his legs.

In this way he got within reaching distance of the hole in the ceiling.

As he put out one hand to grasp the side of the opening, the rope, which was somewhat rotten, gave way suddenly above his head, and he fell like a shot, striking the floor with a tremendous crash that thoroughly startled the three men at the door.

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH ARTHUR GETS HOLD OF A GOLDEN TIP AND MAKES A DANDY HAUL.

The floor beneath the opening was not strong enough to withstand the impact of Arthur Gage's one hundred and forty pounds of avoirdupois.

The boards were soft and pulpy through age, and the boy went through them like a demon through a trap in the stage in a pantomime.

When the startled rascals turned around to see what had

caused the crash he had disappeared into the cellar below, leaving a gaping hole behind him.

"What was that?" gasped Eccles.

"Sounded like the roof had fallen in," replied Griffin, "but it hasn't."

"Something struck the floor, for I felt it shake," said Curley.

"Let's see what caused the noise," said Griffin, walking over into the corner where they had left the young messenger.

The other two followed him.

"Hello!" ejaculated Griffin. "There's a big hole in the floor and the boy is gone!"

"Gone!" cried Eccles and Curley, in a breath.

"Yes, gone. Something must have fallen on him from above, through that hole in the ceiling. It looks as if he's a gone coon."

"What could have fallen on him?" asked Eccles.

"How should I know? Something heavy, from the look of that hole. If the floor wasn't rotten it would have smashed him flat."

"If it was heavy enough to knock him through the floor it must have killed him," said Eccles.

"I wouldn't give a fiver for his life."

The speaker flashed a match down the hole, and the three men saw Arthur Gage lying half stunned directly under the break in the floor.

They believed that he was dead.

"It doesn't matter to us what struck him. Something did," said Griffin.

"Say," said Curley, suddenly, "there was a rope hangin' out of that hole. It's gone."

Griffin remembered seeing the rope, too, and its absence suggested to his mind that whatever it was held the rope must have fallen and caused the damage.

"The rain is letting up," said Eccles. "We'd better get away from here at once."

The other two agreed that the sooner they made a change of base the better.

The neighborhood being deserted, they would not be seen leaving the shed, which would prevent future complications.

Accordingly they started off at once, and Griffin did not miss the money package until they were many blocks away.

Soon after they left the shed Art recovered his faculties and sat up.

He had received a hard whack on the head, and a good shaking up, but no material injury.

He found himself in pitch darkness, and naturally his first impression was to wonder where he was.

In a few minutes recollection returned to him, and he recalled how he was climbing the rope to the loft when it had suddenly given way and precipitated him to the floor with a shock that had knocked his brains wool-gathering.

He had an indistinct idea that the floor had given way under him and that he fell through.

The second shock of hitting the floor of the cellar knocked him unconscious.

As soon as he found out that he was not injured the first thing he did was to feel for the money package.

He was much relieved to find that it was still in his pocket.

"Well, the money is safe, that's some satisfaction; and I don't seem to be hurt, which is another. The floor must have been rotten and I've tumbled into the cellar. I wonder what those rascals thought about the racket? I don't hear any sounds above. Could they have been scared away? It hardly seems likely. I should like to know if they are up there yet. I should think that chap who had the money package must have missed it by this time and would start a search for it. I made quite a hole up there," he added, noticing the break in the gloom which shrouded that end of the shed. "The next thing will be to get out of this place. I suppose there are stairs or something of that kind somewhere, otherwise what good was the cellar to the former occupants?"

He ventured to strike a match and look around.

The place had a distinctly earthy smell, and was littered with dirt, scraps of old iron, discarded horseshoes, broken boxes, while the ceiling and walls were festooned with cobwebs.

There was a rude stairway in the corner opposite from the spot where Art stood, and he immediately walked over to it.

He found that it communicated with a cover or flap opening upward.

Pushing against it the cover yielded after an effort, and Art shoved it open with some caution, for he did not know but the men might still be there.

When his eyes reached the level of the floor he was delighted to see that the shed was vacant.

The rain, which had almost entirely stopped, started in again at a lively rate.

As Art was in the act of pushing the cover up entirely so he could get out he heard the sounds of rapid footsteps outside, and fearing that it was the three men returning he let the cover fall back and took his seat on the steps.

He heard steps on the floor above, as two or more men entered the place, and then after a stamping and shuffling of shoes on the board, comparative silence succeeded.

After a little while Art took courage to lift the flap again and look to see whether the persons were newcomers or the bunch of rascals who had assaulted him.

Glancing out, he saw two well-dressed men close by.

They were evidently gentlemen who had taken refuge in the shed when the rain came on again.

Art concluded that he could safely come out of the cellar, but decided not to, as he had an idea that his personal appearance was not very tidy after his run-in with the three rascals and his tumble into the dirty basement, and he did not care to present himself in that condition in polite society.

The two gentlemen, after impatiently abusing the weather, began to talk on a subject that soon interested their unseen listener.

Art learned that the N. Y. & N. H. road had just acquired possession of the N. Y. & B. and N. Y. & P. C. roads, rivals of the former, by purchasing the Millvale Company, owned by certain large capitalists, which was the holding company of the stock of the two rival roads.

One of the gentlemen remarked that as soon as the announcement of the deal was made public, which would be about the middle of the coming week, it would cause a great stir in financial circles.

"What we've got to do, John," he continued, "is to get hold of as many shares of the two roads that are floating about as possible. When the holding company was formed by consent of the majority of the stockholders of the roads a certain minority, as usual in such cases, refused to agree to the arrangement. I know several of these people in a general way, and some of them I am sure are anxious to sell out at as near the market as they can get. The insiders on this deal are now after them, and consequently we have no time to spare."

"Who are some of these people?"

"Mrs. George Sedgeley, two blocks below here, is one. She's got 2,000 shares of the N. Y. & B. which I understand she'll sell for 22. Then there's Alfred McArthur, of No. — West Seventy-second Street. He has 2,000 of N. Y. & P. C., the market price of which has lately gone down to 21. If we can secure both these batches we'll be able to double our money."

"Well, I'm with you. It will take about \$85,000 to make the two purchases, that is nearly \$45,000 apiece for us. I haven't near that amount at the bank, but I'll be able to raise it Monday, if that will be time enough."

"That will do, for the public won't learn about the deal before Wednesday afternoon or Thursday morning."

The men continued to converse on the subject until the rain finally stopped and the sky showed signs of clearing off, when they left the shed.

Arthur then came up out of the cellar, brushed himself off as well as he could and started for the residence of Mrs. Sedgeley.

He found the house readily enough, and when the servant answered his ring, he asked for Mrs. Sedgeley.

He was asked to step in, and then he told the maid that he had met with an accident on the way, and asked her if she would provide him with a brush to remove the dust from his clothes.

He accepted the service with thanks, and after the job was done he presented her with half a dollar for her trouble.

He was then shown into the parlor and Mrs. Sedgeley was informed that a young man from Broker Warwick's office was waiting below to see her.

When she appeared Art introduced himself and then handed her the package he had brought to her, asking her to count the money and sign the enclosed receipt.

She found the sum to be correct and signed the receipt.

"Now, Mrs. Sedgeley, I suppose you have no objection to me doing you a favor," he said, after he had put the receipt in his pocket.

"What is the favor?" she inquired, with a smile.

"I believe you own 2,000 shares of N. Y. & B. stock," he said.

"I do," she replied.

"Have you been thinking of selling it?"

"I would sell it if I could get what I want for it."

"What is that?"

"Twenty-two dollars a share."

"Well, I think you will have an offer for the stock in a couple of days. Now, if you will take my advice, you will not sell the stock, for I have good reason to know that, owing to a combination of circumstances, your stock is liable

to be worth double its present value before the end of next week."

Mrs. Sedgeley was very anxious to know what Art referred to, and under a promise of secrecy he told her what he had heard the two gentlemen say in the shed.

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Gage," said the lady, who appreciated the tip at its full value. "I shall not sell my stock to either of the gentlemen if they should call on me for that purpose. As an evidence of my appreciation of your kindness in advising me of the probability of a rise in value of my shares, I promise you that I will present you with ten per cent. of whatever I make out of the shares over and above 22."

"Thank you, ma'am," answered Art. "I will not refuse your generous offer."

After quite a pleasant chat with Mrs. Sedgeley Art took his leave, fully determined to try and purchase, through the little bank on Nassau Street, the 2,000 shares of N. Y. & P. C. at present owned by Mr. McArthur, of West Seventy-second Street.

On Monday morning he left the order for the stock at the bank and put up the necessary ten per cent. security on the same, at the same time informing the clerk where the stock could be gotten.

The bank's representative found no difficulty in buying the shares at the market price of 21, and Art was duly notified that they were held subject to his order.

On Wednesday morning Art received a note from Mrs. Sedgeley stating that a gentleman had called on her and tried to induce her to sell her shares of the N. Y. & B., making an offer as high as 30 for them, which fully confirmed in her mind the value of Art's tip, and she had refused to part with the stock.

On Thursday morning the news of the deal between the N. Y. & N. H. and the Millvale holding company came out in all the papers, and it led to great excitement in Wall Street.

The securities of the two small roads which had been acquired by the big line made a jump of 20 points in the market that day, and by Saturday morning 50 was asked and 49 offered for the stock of both.

Both Art and Mrs. Sedgeley sold out at that figure, giving the former the tremendous profit of \$55,000.

Mrs. Sedgeley found that Art's pointer had added \$54,000 to her wealth, and she at once sent him a check for ten per cent. thereof, or \$5,400, thus fulfilling her promise to him.

Thus Art suddenly found his little capital of \$4,600 unexpectedly raised to the goodly sum of \$65,000.

And it all came about through an adventure that had at first promised to turn out greatly to his disadvantage.

This time he decided to say nothing to Bess about his latest success, as his profits were so large that he feared he would have to make an explanation as to how he came by his tip, and he didn't care to do that.

He told his mother the whole story of his adventure on Staten Island, and showed her the check from the bank, covering his winnings.

Of course she was astonished at the amount of his profits, which seemed to her as almost beyond reason, but as the proof of the pudding was before her she could not doubt the truth of it.

Next day Art presented her with \$5,000 to bank for herself.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW BOB PICKERING HELPS ARTHUR TO SWELL HIS CAPITAL.

Art said nothing to Mr. Warwick about the narrow escape he had had from losing the package of money intrusted to his care to deliver to Mrs. Sedgeley.

He did not dream that Sol Eccles, who had entirely slipped out of his memory, was responsible for the outrage worked upon him, and that the men who attacked him had done it under the full belief that he had a large sum of money in his possession.

He thought the affair was merely an ordinary hold-up, though when he came to think it all over at his leisure he recollected that the men had made no attempt to continue their search of his clothes after they had got hold of the package.

Then it struck him that they must have judged the packet to be very valuable, although there was no outward indication on it that it contained money.

Furthermore, he thought it exceedingly strange that they did not immediately tear open the package to see what was in it.

The more he thought about the matter the more singular their actions seemed, but as he could find no solution to the puzzle he gave it up.

One day, about a month later, Bob Pickering came into the office.

"Say, Art, can I make a deal with you?" he said.

"What kind of a deal?" replied our young messenger.

"Well, I've got hold of a tip at last. You have money and can work it if you want to, while I haven't any funds and therefore it's no use to me. Now, if I let you have it I think you ought to let me in on a percentage of your winnings."

"That's fair, if your pointer is worth anything," replied Art.

"It's a good one, all right."

"Let's hear what it is."

Bob told him he had overheard two brokers, whose names he mentioned, talking about a pool that had been formed to boom L. & S. shares. Another broker, named Bradley, was to do the buying on the floor of the Exchange in a day or two.

"If I had a few hundred dollars," said Bob, "I'd back the stock to the limit. I don't see why you shouldn't tackle it."

"I'll look the matter up, Bob. If I go into it and win out I'll give you \$500 flat. Will that suit you?"

"Sure, it will," said the delighted Bob.

Art lost no time in investigating the information.

He found that L. & S. was going at 56.

Two days later he discovered that Broker Bradley was buying the stock as fast as it was offered to him.

The price then had gone up to 57.

"I guess Bob's tip is all right," he thought. "However, it is well not to be too rash. I'll buy 3,000 shares as a starter," and he did.

Two days afterward the stock was up to 59, and he bought 2,000 shares more at that figure.

He had now about half his money up on margin, and he thought that was as much of a risk as he ought to take.

When he saw Bob he told him he had gone into a deal in the stock, and Bob, who felt sure his pointer was a winner, began to have visions of what he would do with that \$500 Art had promised him.

On Monday of the ensuing week L. & S. was quoted at 60, and Art ventured to buy another 1,000 shares.

It went up to 62 that day.

"I'll bet it will go to 70," said Bob that afternoon, when they went home together.

"I hope it will," replied Art. "Though whether I'll dare hold on for that price is a question. I've got a good part of my funds up and I shouldn't care to get pinched."

"Well, I suppose it's up to you to judge when you had better sell. I am interested in that because if you should get caught in this deal I wouldn't get that \$500, and then I'd be badly disappointed."

Next day the brokers began to take a good deal of interest in L. & S., and it advanced to 65 on heavy trading.

On Wednesday there was excitement to burn around the standard of the stock, the announcement was made of a consolidation with another road which gave L. & S. an opening into Pittsburg.

At two o'clock it was going at 70 and a fraction.

Although there was every indication of a further rise next day, Art found time to go to the bank and order his holdings sold at the market.

This was done before three o'clock, and Art sat down to figure up his profits.

On the 3,000 shares he had made \$13 a share; on the 2,000 he bought at 59 he had made \$11 a share, and on the last 1,000 shares his profit was \$10 a share—making a total of \$71,000 to the good.

He had done so well that he decided that it would be the right thing to double the \$500 he had promised Bob.

Next morning the report of the consolidation was denied and the price of the shares tumbled like wildfire.

Bob saw the slump on the ticker and it gave him a fit, for he was afraid Art had not closed out.

He rushed into Mr. Warwick's office to see him, but Art was out on an errand, and so he had to curb his impatience and trepidation as best he could.

His boss sent him on an errand before Art got back, and thus it was all day, so that the boys did not come together until after office hours.

By that time the bottom had fallen completely out of L. & S., and it was selling way down at 55.

"Say, Art, did you sell out? L. & S. has gone down to the bow-wows, and I've been in a cold sweat all day. I was into your office three times trying to see you, but every time you were out."

"Then you've had your funk for nothing," replied his friend, coolly. "I sold out yesterday at the top of the market nearly, and I made a good thing out of the deal."

"Glory hallelujah!" cried Bob. "Then I get my \$500."

"I've done so well by your tip that I have concluded to give you twice \$500."

"What!" ejaculated Bob. "You don't mean that!"

"I do mean it. As soon as I get a settlement with the bank you shall have \$1,000 cash. You are entitled to it."

"Art, you're a brick! How much did you make, anyway?"

"That is a business secret, Bob. Be satisfied with the \$1,000."

"I will. Gee! I'll be wealthy."

"No painting the town red with that money, old man. Put it in a bank and hold on to it, and don't you dare go investing it in stocks yourself, for you aren't the kind of chap to stand the excitement."

"Me invest \$1,000 in stocks? Not on your life! I never expected to be worth so much money, not for years, so I'm not going to take any chances with it."

"That's the way to talk. I don't go into the market myself unless I see a mighty good opening. I bought L. & S. in three different lots, at a rising figure. I wouldn't risk too much on it at first."

"How came you to sell out yesterday? It looked good for a higher jump to-day."

"Just instinct, I guess. When it reached 70 I concluded not to take further chances with it. I noticed that the report of the consolidation had not been confirmed, though the newspapers printed the news as though it was a foregone conclusion. That's how the general public gets it in the neck. They take too much for granted."

"I guess they do. I'll bet a whole lot of people dropped their good money in this boom. I know there was a lot of weeping and gnashing of teeth in our office over the unexpected slump. I felt sorry for them, but then I had my own troubles, for I didn't know whether you were in the soup or not with the rest. In fact, I thought you were, for you hadn't sold when I saw you last."

"Well, you can go home and eat a hearty supper to-night, feeling that you are ahead of the game."

"Bet your life I can. I tell you I feel like a bird."

Art also felt like a bird, or a whole nest full of birds, too, for he was now worth \$130,000.

Nobody was on to that fact but his mother.

She was his only confidante.

He had ceased altogether to tell Bessie about his stock transactions, and she, supposing that he was out of the market, never referred to the matter.

Mr. and Mrs. Warwick could hardly fail to observe the growing attachment between the young people, but they did not attempt to nip it in the bud.

The broker had long since sized up Arthur as an uncommonly smart boy, and was satisfied he was going to make his mark in the world.

He would certainly have opened his eyes very wide indeed if he had found out that the boy had made such a big sum of money out of the stock market.

Art had accomplished the feat without once neglecting his duties to his employer, which made the matter all the more remarkable.

He would have been the happiest boy in the world if it hadn't been for the mystery which still hovered around his father.

Mrs. Gage had given her husband up for dead months since, but not so Art.

While he did not believe that his father had skipped out to parts unknown with that half a million, for he felt sure that had his father taken the money he would have been located before that lapse of time, he believed that the miss-

ing money had something to do with his parent's disappearance.

Just why he figured the matter out this way he could not satisfactorily explain, but he was always thinking about it that way, nevertheless.

He earnestly hoped that the mystery might be cleared up some day, for until it was, the stigma of it all would cling to his father's memory, and incidentally overshadow himself and his mother as well.

He frequently talked the matter over with Bessie, of whose sympathy he was assured, and she always tried to cheer him up by telling him that she was confident that his father's name would ultimately be vindicated.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ABDUCTION.

We have said Griffin did not discover the absence of the money package he had taken from Arthur Gage that rainy afternoon on Staten Island until he and his companions were some distance from the scene of the robbery.

When he did find it out there was something doing.

What he said would hardly look well in type, and what Eccles and Curley said was equally emphatic.

Griffin was satisfied that he must have dropped the package in the shed somehow, and his associates agreed that there was no other way to account for its loss, unless it had dropped out of his pockets en route.

It was up to them to retrace their steps, for a package supposed to contain the sum of \$5,000 was altogether too valuable to be abandoned without an effort for its recovery.

The fresh shower of rain that came up held them anchored for twenty minutes under a big tree.

That was the rain which sent the two gentlemen into the shed, and incidentally provided Art with his golden tip.

When Griffin and his companions finally reached the shed Art had only left it a few minutes before.

They made a thorough search for the package, but found it not.

Then they thought they would look and see whether the boy they supposed to be knocked out showed any signs of life.

When Eccles flashed a match down the hole the boy in question was no longer there.

"He's crawled away somewhere in the cellar, or, not being so badly hurt as we supposed, has got out of the place and gone away," said Eccles.

"That's what it looks like," admitted Griffin. "Drop down there, Curley, and see whether he's there or not."

Curley lowered himself into the cellar, and by matchlight looked the place over, but there was no sign of Art, who at that moment was ringing the bell at the home of Mrs. Sedgely.

Curley reported the facts and his associates helped him out of the cellar.

"Maybe the young monkey found the package where I dropped it, somewhere near the door," said Griffin, with an imprecation at the thought.

"It is possible, since there's no sign of it around," replied Eccles. "Why the dickens couldn't you have been more careful with the package? We're simply out a cold

\$1,700 apiece that we had collared in such a fortunate way. It's enough to make a man swear like blue blazes."

There didn't seem to be any doubt but that the package was gone for good, and they left the shed in a pretty bad humor indeed.

What they did between that time and a certain afternoon two weeks later does not concern this story.

On the afternoon in question they were seated in a small back room of a cheap saloon in the Tenderloin district, drinking and smoking.

That they seemed to have plenty of money now was evidenced by the fact that champagne was the nectar they were swallowing and the cigars that graced their lips were two-for-a-quarter ones.

The three were dressed in smart business suits.

Griffin and Curley no longer looked like mechanics, but rather like the average sport whose haunts were in the neighborhood.

Their full beards had vanished, and both sported only mustaches.

Eccles looked like he did before, only better dressed, and with a diamond ring on his little finger.

Clearly they had made a haul somewhere.

As they didn't expect their funds to last forever they were plotting to secure another windfall.

And this scheme centered around Broker Warwick, whom they expected to kidnap and hold for ransom.

The proprietor of a private sanitarium out in New Jersey, who had a very expansive conscience when there was a fat wad in sight, had consented to help them out on condition of receiving a quarter of the profits.

The sanitarium had formerly been a large farmhouse.

Dr. Craft had bought it, with its surrounding acres, cheap.

Then he built a tall wall with barbed wire protectors on top around the house and a portion of the ground.

A stout door was put in the wall on which a brass plate announced that this was "Dr. Craft's Sanitarium."

Then the doctor let the fact be known that he boarded and lodged patients for an indefinite period, and that he made a specialty of "troublesome" persons afflicted with manias, who otherwise appeared to be sane.

This institution was started while Arthur Gage was at the Berkeley Academy, and it wasn't long before Dr. Craft had a number of permanent "patients," for whose board, lodging and "treatment" he received a liberal compensation.

Griffin had worked for the doctor in the capacity of head keeper, and that is how he came to know him and his methods.

A yearning for the lights and shadows of the Tenderloin had caused Griffin to sever his relations with Dr. Craft much against his employer's will.

The doctor sent Griffin a sum of money every little while to remind him that a still tongue makes a wise head, which, in plain English, meant that his former keeper was not to say anything about what he knew of the inner workings of the sanitarium.

When the plan was broached to spirit Broker Warwick out of New York the doctor's sanitarium was selected as the place where he could be temporarily detained until he was willing to accede to the demands of his abductors.

Eccles knew that Mr. Warwick went to a certain Turkish bath house every Saturday afternoon, and then took a cab for his home.

The scheme was to provide a certain cabman to secure the broker as a "fare."

This cab was especially arranged for the introduction of a drug through the roof for the purpose of rendering a passenger temporarily insensible so that he could be easily robbed by a confederate.

The cabby plied his trade at night, but he had no objection to doing day work when somebody wanted to avail himself of the vehicle and was willing to pay well for the accommodation.

Eccles, Griffin and Curley completed their plot that afternoon in the back room of the saloon.

It was to be put into execution on the following day, which was Saturday.

It was the broker's custom to take a light lunch downtown at noon, then ride uptown to his club, and around four o'clock go to the bath house.

That afternoon Art and Bob went for a long bicycle ride in New Jersey.

On their return they were belated along the road by the breakdown of Bob's machine, which required some repairs before it would bear its rider on his way.

The place where they were held up was close to Dr. Craft's Sanitarium, and it was dusk by the time they were ready to continue their journey to Hoboken.

At that moment a cab rolled rapidly up the road.

The horse shied at the indistinct figures of the boys as they left the shelter of a tree and, making a sudden dash forward, ran into a tree, and smashed the front axle, the vehicle turning over on its side and dumping the driver and another man who sat on the box into the dust.

"Gee!" exclaimed Bob. "Here's trouble to burn. Come, let's lend them a hand, Art."

The boys hastily dismounted from their wheels, stood them against the tree and ran to the men's assistance.

Both appeared to be pretty badly shaken up, and after raising them up, Art went to the partly overturned cab, opened the door and looked inside.

A peculiar fruity smell assaulted the boy's nose as the air in the vehicle escaped in his face.

He saw the figure of a man huddled in a heap on the floor of the cab.

Presuming he had been stunned by the accident, Art seized him by the arms and drew him out into the air.

Looking in the passenger's face, he was astonished when, even in the growing darkness, he recognized his employer.

"My gracious!" the boy ejaculated. "It's Mr. Warwick."

At that moment one of the men, who had recovered his faculties, observed what Art was about.

With an imprecation he sprang to his feet, dashed at the young messenger and felled him to the road with a terrible blow on the side of the head, which rendered the boy unconscious.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONFINED IN THE CELLAR.

When Arthur came to his senses he had a very confused idea of his surroundings.

It was some moments before he realized that he was sitting against a post to which he was secured by a rope passed several times around his body and arms.

Clearly he was a prisoner, and in some place where the darkness was so thick that it seemed as if it could be cut into chunks.

"What the dickens am I up against?" he asked himself. "I remember now that I had just assisted the insensible form of Mr. Warwick out of the overturned cab when one of the men connected with the vehicle rushed at me like a wild animal and gave me a smash alongside the head that felt as if a pile driver had hit me. At any rate, that is all I remember. Now I find myself bound to this post. I'd like to know why I've been made a prisoner. And I wonder where Bob is, and whether anything happened to him. He never would desert me."

Art kicked out his foot, which came into contact with something soft and produced an ejaculation in Bob's voice.

"Hold on, there, Art. Those are my ribs. Have you come to your senses?"

"Why, hello, Bob, you there?" replied Art, in surprise. "Are you a prisoner, too?"

"I should think I am. The rascals trussed me up to a post just as they did you."

"What did they treat us that way for?"

"Ask me something easier," growled Bob. "When that chap knocked you silly in the road while you were helping his passenger out of the upset cab, I put up a big protest. What did I get for it? A clout on the head from the other chap that made me see a shower of stars. Before I could turn on him he fetched me a second clip that landed me in the road half dazed. The two men then came together and I heard them talking together and swearing like troopers, evidently blaming us for the accident. After a consultation one of them went up to the gate of the sanitarium and rang the bell. While he was away my wits came back and I started to get up. The other chap saw me move and he pounced on me like a load of bricks. He took a blackjack from his pocket and swore he'd smash my head in if I didn't lie quiet. Under the circumstances I concluded to obey orders. I guess you would have done so, too. After a little while the other man came back with a couple of stout fellows who carried ropes in their hands. They grabbed me and tied my arms behind my back in spite of a strenuous objection on my part. I asked them what they took me for, but they only laughed and requested me to shut up. Then they went over to you and treated you likewise. After which they grabbed me and carried me inside the gate of the sanitarium. The two cabmen followed with you. They dropped us on the ground and soon after I saw the cab chaps carry their passenger, who was senseless, through the gate, too, and up to the front door of the building, where he was taken charge of by others and carried inside. Then the four men took you and me and carried us down into the basement of the building. Lighting a lantern so they could see their way, we were conveyed into this place, which is a boarded-up section of the cellar. They bound us both to posts and then retired, padlocking the door on us. Now you've got the whole story."

"I don't see why they treated us in this rough way," said Art. "One would think they took us for highway robbers."

"I guess they're trying to get square with us because of the accident that happened to the cab. The horse shied at us as we took the road on our wheels and they put the blame of the mishap on us, no doubt."

"We're not responsible for what their horse did."

"Whether we are or not, we're in a bad pickle over it. Small chance of our getting home to-night, at this rate."

"I shall make a big kick to Mr. Warwick over this."

"What good will that do? We don't know who these cabmen are."

"He'll know."

"How will he?"

"Why, he was their passenger."

"What!" ejaculated Bob.

"It was Mr. Warwick who I was helping out of the cab when that big chap knocked me end over end with his fist."

"You don't say. I wonder what brought him away out here in a cab?"

"That's his business, not ours. I'm sorry that we were the unintentional cause of his mishap. I hope he isn't hurt. I should never forgive myself if he was."

"It's a good thing for him that the sanitarium was close by. The doctor of the place will bring him around all right, so you needn't worry. The question that most concerns us is what these cab chaps intend to do with us."

"I don't mean to stay here if I can help myself," replied Art, doggedly.

"How are you going to help yourself?"

"By trying to get free. Why don't you see if you can work your arms loose from the rope? That's what I'm trying to do now."

"I'm bound too tight."

"S'pose you are bound tight, the rope might be made to give. I've nearly got one of my arms loose already."

"If you have you're a bird, or you're not bound as tight as I am. Why, I can hardly breathe from the way the rope hugs my chest."

Arthur made no reply, but continued to tug away at his bonds.

It is true his bonds were not as secure as Bob's but that would have made no difference to him.

Bob gave up in disgust after a few ineffective efforts, while Art kept working away, resting only when he was forced to.

"Well, how are you getting on?" growled Bob.

"Slowly, but surely," replied Art.

"I can't do a thing with my ropes. They might be made of steel for all the impression I can make on them."

"I'll cut you loose if I can get free," replied his friend, encouragingly.

After another fifteen minutes' work Art got one of his arms loose.

It was his right arm, and that was all he wanted.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, got out his jack-knife, and the rest was easy.

"I'm free, Bob," he said, exultantly.

"Are you, really?" asked Bob, joyfully.

"This looks like it," he replied, as he crawled over to his companion and began to cut him loose.

"You're all to the good, old man," replied Bob, in a tone of satisfaction, as he stood up and rubbed his limbs and chest where the rope had chafed them.

"The next thing is to get out of this hole," said Art, striking a match and looking over the enclosure.

"The door is locked, I think with a padlock," said Bob. "I heard them fix it when they left."

Bob's statement proved to be correct, and it looked as if they were cornered.

Art tried the boards one by one to see if he could find a weak one, but they all seemed to be solid enough.

He noticed that one had an immense knot in the center.

"If we could drive that knot out we could break the board in half easy enough," he remarked. "We could then force the lower end out and that would leave an opening wide enough for us to pass through."

Art tried his heel on the knot several times, and so did Bob, but they made no impression on it.

"That won't do," said Art. "Let's see if we can't find something that will do better."

A survey of the place produced results in the shape of a piece of iron water pipe.

With this instrument the knot was demolished, then the board was broken at the knothole and the lower half pulled inside and wrenched off.

The boys squeezed themselves through the opening and thus obtained the freedom of the whole cellar.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

"Now, if the cellar door is not locked, or otherwise secured, we will be able to walk out," said Art. "You saw where they brought us down. Lead the way."

With the help of matchlight Bob traced his way to a short flight of stone steps covered by a pair of wooden shutters that worked on hinges.

"Here's where they brought us down," said Bob.

Art ran up the steps and pushed against the cover.

It was held by a staple and padlock on the outside.

"We can't get out down here," said Art. "Perhaps we can get out of a window on the next story."

He started up the stairs with Bob at his heels.

He tried two doors and found them locked, and then laid his hand on the knob of the third.

It was not locked, but as he started to push it open he heard a soft, oily voice in the room.

"Come, now, Gage, don't act sulky," said the voice. "If you continue to give me trouble I'll have to put you in a straitjacket, do you understand?"

"Man, man, will no appeal that I can make to you soften your heart?" replied a voice that sent the blood rushing back on Art's heart, for he distinctly recognized the voice as his father's. "You know, Dr. Craft, that I am the victim of a dastardly plot. You know that David Mallison is paying you to keep me here a hopeless prisoner while he is free, enjoying the fruits of his villainy," went on the familiar tones.

Arthur waited to hear no more.

Dashing open the door, he rushed into the room, crying: "Father! Father!"

Dr. Craft, who was a little man, with a silky mustache and snaky black eyes, sprang around and faced the boy.

Art thrust him aside and rushed to his father, who had sprung from his chair on recognizing his son's voice.

The astonished Bob saw Art throw himself into the arms of the white-faced man whom he called father.

Dr. Craft, with an imprecation, made a dart for the doorway, but Bob headed him off, and shut the door behind him.

"Not much," said Bob. "You don't get out of this room yet."

The doctor placed his hand in his smoking-jacket pocket and pulled out an ivory whistle.

As he placed it to his lips Bob struck him a heavy blow in the mouth, knocking him half way across the room.

"We must get out of here at once, Art," said Bob, bringing his companion back to the realization of their surroundings.

"Come, father, you are going back to New York with us. Put on your hat and coat. Don't ask me how I came here. We'll tell our stories when we are out of this sanitarium. Mother will be wild with joy when she learns that you are alive. Neither she nor I ever believed that you ran off with that money. The truth will now come out to the world, and the guilty man shall receive just punishment for his double crime."

In a dazed sort of way Frank Gage put on his hat and coat, while Art examined the window.

Escape could not be made that way, for it was provided with iron bars and wooden shutters.

"We'd better secure this chap," said Bob, pointing to the doctor.

Art thought so, too, so they bound and gagged him with strips torn from the coarse blanket on the bed.

Then the three left the room and locked the door after them, thus making a prisoner of the doctor.

Passing along the corridor they came to the front staircase, down which they took their way.

The front door was before them.

It was locked and bolted, but the key was there, and in a moment or two the three were outside of the building.

They slipped across to the gate, but this was barred and locked and the key was not in it.

Art's sharp eye, however, saw it hanging from a nail in a crevice, and he grabbed it, thrust it into the lock, and opened the gate as soon as Bob took the bar down.

Once outside they walked hurriedly to the tree where the boys had left their wheels, which were still there.

"Now, Bob," said Art, "hustle into Hoboken, and tell the facts to the police. There may be other patients in that house that are held there against their will. Father and I will wait here till you come back with a patrol wagon and officers to arrest the rascals inside."

While father and son waited under the shadow of the tree for the police to come and expose the crookedness of the sanitarium, Frank Gage told his son the story of how he came to be hidden away from the world in the sanitarium.

It appeared that David Mallison, the president of the Atlas Trust Co., had become involved in a big stock speculation in which he had lost every cent he had, and had accumulated debts of above \$100,000.

He got Frank Gage to remain one night at the office to go over some papers with him, and then chloroformed him and had him quietly removed to Dr. Craft's sanitarium, where he had previously arranged for his reception, and his life incarceration.

Then he took the half-million, settled his obligations, and gave out the impression that the cashier had decamped with the money.

Art then told his father how he and Bob came to be in the sanitarium, and how they had escaped from the cellar.

By the time both their stories were finished a patrol wagon came up with Bob and half a dozen policemen.

The doctor and his assistants were arrested, and the "patients" liberated.

Among them Art was surprised to find Mr. Warwick, who had just recovered from his stupor.

Mr. David Mallison was arrested at his residence that night, and on information from Dr. Craft, by the third degree, Griffin, Curley and Eccles were also captured by the police in the Tenderloin.

When Art broke the news of his father's return to his mother, she fainted from joy, and when she came to she found herself in her husband's arms.

Mr. Warwick gave Art and Bob all the credit of his rescue from the sanitarium, and presented each with a \$1,000 bill.

When Art called at the broker's house on Wednesday night, Bessie rushed into the room, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him.

"Next to my father's return and vindication that is the best thing that ever happened to me," he said, holding the blushing girl in his arms.

Before he left that night he and Bessie were engaged, with her parents' consent.

David Mallison was duly tried, convicted and sent to the State's prison.

So also were Griffin, Eccles and Curley for a lesser term.

Frank Gage was put back in his old position of cashier by the directors of the Atlas Trust Co., and they also gave him a handsome present as a token of their sympathy.

Arthur was promoted to Mr. Warwick's counting room, and is now his representative on the floor of the Stock Exchange, with a partnership in prospect when he marries Bessie, which happy event is expected to happen in the course of a year.

Art finds opportunities to continue trading on his own account, and has now \$200,000 capital at his back, half of which he will put into his prospective father-in-law's business when he becomes the junior partner.

Although Art lost his chance for a college education, he never regrets that he had to leave school for Wall Street.

THE END.

Read "STRANDED OUT WEST; OR, THE BOY WHO FOUND A SILVER MINE," which will be the next number (115) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

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GOOD STORIES.

Lord Rosebery, formerly British Prime Minister, is an authority on gardening, though most people know him only as a statesman and author. As a matter of fact, he has every reason to be gardener and farmer both, as he owns 26,000 acres of land in Scotland and some 8,000 in England, and also has a villa, literally embowered in flowers and flowering shrubs, overlooking the Bay of Naples.

Domestic animals are very scarce in Japan. Cows are unknown in that country; there are but few horses, and these are imported mainly for the use of foreigners. The carts used for the conveyance of merchandise in the city streets are pulled and pushed by coolies, and the pleasure carriages are drawn by men. Dogs are not often seen; there are no sheep, and wool is not used in clothing, silk and cotton being the staples. There are no pigs—pork is an unknown article of diet—there are no goats, or mules, or donkeys. Wild animals there are, however, and, in particular, bears of enormous size.

The veto hitherto placed upon the Parisian waiter's mustache has been contrasted with the compulsion imposed upon British army officers to grow one if they can. But at the extreme antipodes from the waiter's deprivation lay the absolutely necessary mustache required of the French First Hussars in the veracious Marbot's time. For the sake of uniformity, every member of the corps, he records, had to wear a mustache, a pigtail, love-locks, and locks on the temples. Joining as a lad, he brought none of these with him; but a sham pigtail and locks were obtained from the regimental barber, and the Sergeant, in accordance with regimental custom, took a pot of blacking and made two enormous hooks on his face, from the upper lip almost to the eyes. On a hot day the blacking drew the skin most unpleasantly.

Dr. George L. Glover, head of the veterinary department of the State Agricultural College, Colorado, and Dr. Lamb, State Veterinary Surgeon, investigated the cause of the death of 150 head of cattle on the range on the Horselly. They found, after a personal examination of the places where the cattle died that death was undoubtedly caused from a bulb plant carrying a yellow blossom, which is called carnian. It was found to be growing luxuriantly surrounding the dead cattle, and Dr. Lamb expressed the opinion that there was sufficient poison in one blossom to kill several people. He said an animal, after eating one of these blossoms, would die in less than an hour. The surgeons took the viscera of an animal with them and will have it analyzed, in order to report to the ranchmen an antidote which can be administered which will save the cattle when closely guarded. The doctors left for Cimarron, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the cattle which died there were killed from the

same poison weed. The loss of cattle has been fully 4,000 head.

Colonial diaries and letters make it plain that our unfortunate ancestors suffered much from jumping toothaches, swelled faces and the early loss by forcible extraction of teeth which, at a later period, might have been saved, to render their owners many years of further service. No wonder, since the care of the teeth was little understood and that little often but negligently practised.

Toothpicks were known, tooth-brushes were not, although rough substitutes were employed, made of flattened sticks, split and pounded at one end to a stiff fibrous fringe. Tooth-brushes, when first introduced, were regarded as by no means important accessories to the toilet, but rather as minor luxuries and suitable for women only.

In view of the recent frightful accident from an explosion of gas in one of the coal mines at Reden, near Saarbruecken, Germany, which killed 150 miners, it is interesting to learn what progress has been made during the last twenty-five years in securing the lives of men employed in Prussian coal mines against dangers from such explosions. The Prussian authorities have so improved the appliances needed in coal mining and have adopted so many precautionary measures to protect the lives of miners that, while, on the average, 571 miners of every 1,000,000 annually lost their lives during the decade 1881-1890, this record has been steadily reduced until, in 1905, only 29 perished from explosion by fire damp. This shows what intelligent, systematic and persistent effort can and does accomplish in saving human lives from danger and accident.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Lucy Snow—Bill Jackson doan seem able to git a libin' nohow. Sam Johnsing—No, an' he sho' hab tried hard enuff. Lucy Snow—Go 'long, man! Why, he ain't got no gumption nohow. Sam Johnsing—Oh! he got de gumption, all right; but he's too homely. No gal will marry him.

A Creek freedman faker, in order to sell the land of his wife and four children, took the buyer out to the cemetery and pointed out five headstones bearing the names of his family. The man who holds the sack has discovered that the woman and children are very much alive, and is hunting for the slick negro with a shotgun.

"Here you are, my man," said a gentleman to the porter who had seen to his luggage. "Here's a shilling for you." The porter was about to take the coin when he espied one of the railway directors leaning out of the next compartment. "We are not allowed to tek tips, mister," he said in a voice loud enough for the director to hear. "But," he continued in a whisper, "yo con let id drop on th' platform accidentally, an' aw'll se as id doesn'd ged lost."

For more than a week the teacher had been giving lessons on the dog, and so when the inspector came down and chose that very subject there seemed every prospect of the class distinguishing itself on brilliant essays about our canine friend. Things were progressing quite satisfactorily, and the master was congratulating himself on the trouble he had taken, when, alas! a question was asked which made him tremble for the reputation of his scholars. "Why does a dog hang his tongue out of his mouth?" asked the inspector. "Yes, my boy?" he said to a bright looking lad who held up his hand, while the light of genius was in his eye. "Please, sir," cried the pupil, "it's to balance his tail!" And the teacher groaned in anguish.

AN ADVENTURE WITH PIRATES IN CHINESE WATERS

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

From the year 1852 to 1854 the Chinese Sea, from Shanghai in the north to Singapore in the south, was infested with pirate craft. As for that matter, this sea had been the cruising ground of pirates for a score of years previously, but I mention these two years for particular reasons. One was that I was engaged in a vigorous warfare against them, and the other that the close of 1854 witnessed the death of the leading spirits and broke up piracy as a trade.

In those far back days comparatively nothing was known of China outside of a few seaports. Treaties were of little account, and consuls were few and far between. Every merchant ship was expected to defend herself, and the captain of every man-of-war had authority to bombard any town which refused to renew his water and provisions.

All nations were trading with China, but, aside from a few seaports, all China hated all other people. At the docks at Hong Kong I could drink tea with the Chinese merchants. Half a mile away the people would have cut me to pieces. While the country wanted to sell its products, it hated the men who bought them. While it wanted the goods of other countries, it despised the makers and shippers. There is no doubt that the Chinese Government tacitly encouraged piracy, and, could the great mass of the population have had its say, not a single foreigner would have ever been allowed to land on the coast.

In the year '54 there was an association at Canton called "The Foreign Traders." It was composed of Americans, Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards, and Russians, and numbered over sixty representatives. The capital represented amounted to millions, and the object was threefold. We had more power with the Chinese Government than any foreign minister. We had rules and regulations regarding the tea trade. We could carry a point by protests and threats. Every pound of tea from a district 500 miles square had to pass through our hands. We filed many protests against the pirates and the laxity of the government in hunting them down, and were finally officially informed that we were at liberty to take any steps we deemed best in the matter. That meant we could fit out a craft and go for the rascals right and left handed.

We had been anticipating this, and had a craft ready at Hong Kong. She was an American schooner of excellent model and large spread of sail, and we knew that she could outsail anything, native or foreign, we had ever seen in those waters. We armed her with a Long Tom, and four 24-pounders, having bought the guns from the sale of the salvage of a French man-of-war. Then we picked up a crew of fifty men—all foreigners and sailors—and when we went out of Hong Kong we were prepared to give the pirates Hail Columbia. I was purser of the schooner, which was called the *Revenge*, and her captain was an Englishman named Wetherbee, who had served as a commissioned officer in the regular service. The first lieutenant was an American, and the other officers were divided up among the other nationalities. We flew the association flag, and while we had the liberty to go for pirates, we were warned that any mistakes would be made to cost us dearly.

The two boss pirates of that date were Shung-Wong and Chin-Lung. The first had a fleet of seven or eight craft, and haunted the sea from Singapore north to the Tong-Kin Islands. The second cruised from thence as far north as Shanghai, having his headquarters at Formosa Island. He was reported to have a fleet of nine craft. That both were monsters we had a hundred proofs, and that both had grown rich and powerful it was easy to show by the long list of missing vessels hanging in the headquarters office. While we had kept out movements as secret as possible, we had no doubt that government officials had given us away, and that the pirates would be on the watch for us. To deceive them as far as possible, we ran to the south for three days, and spoke and reported to four ships bound for Canton. Then we ran over toward the Philippine Islands until we had a good offing, when we headed up for Formosa to get acquainted with old Chin-Lung.

During the next three days we did not sight a sail of any sort. Then early one morning we fell in with a lot of wreckage which showed us that a trader had been overhauled and burned. We were now to the east of Formosa, and fifty miles off the coast. Men were set to work to give the schooner the appearance of a vessel in distress, and under a light breeze we made slow headway toward the island. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon before anything approached us, although we saw a number of native craft at a distance. Then a small junk came out from a bay about five miles off, and headed directly for us. Everything aboard of us seemed to be at sixes and sevens. A man was lashed to the mainmast to represent the captain, everything aloft was askew, and the seven or eight men on deck were seemingly drunk and having a high old time. We had a man aloft to play a part, knowing that we should be hailed in English. Both of these boss pirates had Americans and Englishmen with them—rascals who had deserted their ships and voluntarily adopted the life of a pirate—and one of them was always put forward to hail a ship.

The junk came steadily forward to within hailing distance before she came up into the wind. This was proof, whether she was honest or not, that our appearance had deceived her. The men on deck yelled and shook their fists, as drunken men might do, but at the first opportunity a voice hailed us.

"Schooner ahoy! What schooner is that?"

"The *Revenge*, Captain Thatcher, bound to Shanghai," answered the man aloft.

"What's the matter aboard?"

"Crew in a state of mutiny for the last three days. They have lashed the captain to the mast and driven me aloft."

"What's your cargo?"

"General merchandise."

"Any arms aboard?"

"Only a few muskets."

There were a dozen men aboard the junk, but they dared not attempt to board. They chattered away among themselves for a while, and then the spokesman called out:

"Very well, we will bring you help."

With that the junk headed back for the bay, accompanied by the yells and curses of the apparently drunken crew. We had a native aboard called Shin-Lee. He had been in the headquarters office for several years, and could be depended upon. He gave it as his opinion that the junk was a spy-boat sent out by the pirates, who never attacked a vessel by day-

light without taking all due precautions. He said we would see the pirate fleet come out in case no sail appeared on the horizon, and his words were speedily verified. We had been gradually edging in shore, and were not over five miles from the land, when we caught sight of five junks coming out after us. There was a good working breeze, and now, as was only natural, we began to claw off. By seeming to want to get away very badly, but by carefully manipulating the helm, we were seven miles off the land before the fleet reached us. We were satisfied of their intentions long enough before. It was not to help a vessel in distress, but to take advantage of one almost helpless.

The junks kept pretty well together, and when within rifle shot each one raised Chin-Lung's flag and uttered a cheer. Each had a couple of howitzers, with which they opened fire on the schooner, but no harm had been done when we were ready to spring the trap. At the word of command every man was on deck, the gun crews jumped to their stations, and things aloft were shipshape in a moment. Then we wore round to get between the pirates and the bay, and opened fire. A Chinese junk is a mere shell. Our solid shot went through them as if they had been paper. The poor devils were unnerved as soon as they saw the trap into which they had fallen, and devoted all their energies to getting away. We could outsail any of the junks, but it was quick work with four of them. They were sent to the bottom, one after another, and as we came up with the fifth we ran her down. Our stem struck her full on the starboard side and cut her almost in two. She had at least thirty men aboard, and there was one long, despairing shriek as they went down to watery graves. A few came up to clutch at the wreckage and beg to be taken aboard, but not one of them would the captain lend a hand to.

Such as the sharks did not get hold of drifted out to sea with the tide. It was a fearful retribution, but these men were monsters. Inside of thirty minutes from the time we opened fire the fleet was at the bottom and at least a hundred pirates had paid the penalty of their crimes.

Our captain was lamenting the fact that he had not picked up one or two in order to secure information, when there was a row forward, and it was announced that a pirate had been found hanging to the chains. When brought aft he was ready to do anything to save his life. His name was Mung-Hang, and he had good cause to believe we would reverse it. He was captain of the junk we had run down, and was ready to tell us all about old Chin-Lung. The bay was his rendezvous, but his plunder was hidden on the coast near Foo-Chow. There were barracks for the men up the bay, and thirty or forty men there at that moment.

They had captured a French brig several days before, and she was then at anchor in the bay, waiting for Chin-Lung's return. He was then up among the Lioo Kioo Islands with four junks to capture a large ship which had drifted into shoal water, but was not abandoned. If we would spare his life he would pilot us anywhere and prove his gratitude in any way. Shin-Lee took him in hand for a few minutes, and then announced that we could depend upon him. We ran into the bay, brought up alongside the brig, and sent forty men ashore to clean out the place. Not a pirate was to be seen, all having bolted for the woods. Everything which would burn was set on fire, and a prize crew was put aboard the brig to navigate

her to Hong Kong. She reached that port safely, and our salvage money went far to reimburse the company for its outlay.

When we sailed out of the bay it was to look for the boss pirate. He was nearer than we thought for. At eight o'clock next morning we saw his fleet dead ahead, on its way back to Formosa, empty handed, and by ten we had the junks under fire. These were a braver lot of men. Knowing that they could not outsail us, and seeming to suspect that we were an enemy, they closed right in for a fight. It did not last long, however. We had one man killed by the fall of a block from aloft, and three or four wounded by the bullets from their ancient firearms, and in return not a man of them escaped. In less than an hour's fighting, altogether, we sent nine junks and 200 men to destruction. Butchery, was it? Well, call it so; but remember that in the previous twelve months the fleet of this old pirate had captured no less than ten foreign craft and six traders, and that every man, woman and child aboard had been murdered. There was no sentiment about Chin-Lung. He thought of nothing but blood and plunder, and he would cut a child's throat with a smile on his face.

We were now ready to sail in search of Shung-Wong, who had less power, but who was just as great a villain. These two leaders had divided up the territory and compelled all lesser pirates to join them and come under their control. So, then, we had only two men to strike at to down the whole lot. At the close of the third day after heading for the south we came upon the track of the piratical fleet. A trader in woods and dye-stuffs had been overhauled about a hundred miles north of the northern group of Philippines, called the Little Philippines. The crew consisted of three men and a boy, and the vessel had only part of a cargo. Shung-Wong had boarded her himself, and although the crew were native Chinese, he could not restrain his bloody hand. He demanded a sum equal to \$300 in American money. There was only about \$20 aboard, and he personally cut the captain's throat, had the others flogged, and went on his way to the Bay of Luzon, which is on the west side of the island by that name. We spoke to the trader, and received from her terrified crew the incidents above narrated, and then shaped our course for the bay.

As luck would have it, an American ship called the Joseph Taylor was ahead of us, and as she passed down the coast was attacked by the fleet, about seven miles off shore. We heard the rumpus about an hour before daylight. There was but little breeze, and though greatly outnumbered, the crew of the Taylor beat the pirates off. At daylight the wind freshened, and we slid in between the junks and the shore just as they were preparing for a second attack. We were no sooner within range than we opened on them, and, seeing escape cut off, the fellows tried hard to lay us aboard. In thirty minutes from the opening of the fight we had sunk or run down every junk and disposed of every pirate, and only had four men wounded in doing it.

Our work had been done so promptly and well that it struck terror to the hearts of all evil-doers in those seas, and it was several years before another act of piracy was committed. The Chinese Government returned its thanks to the association, ship owners sent in contributions of money to express their gratitude, and when we came to sell the schooner to the Chinese Government as a cruiser, the company was financially ahead. It was probably the briefest cruise and attended with the greatest results recorded of an armed vessel.

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